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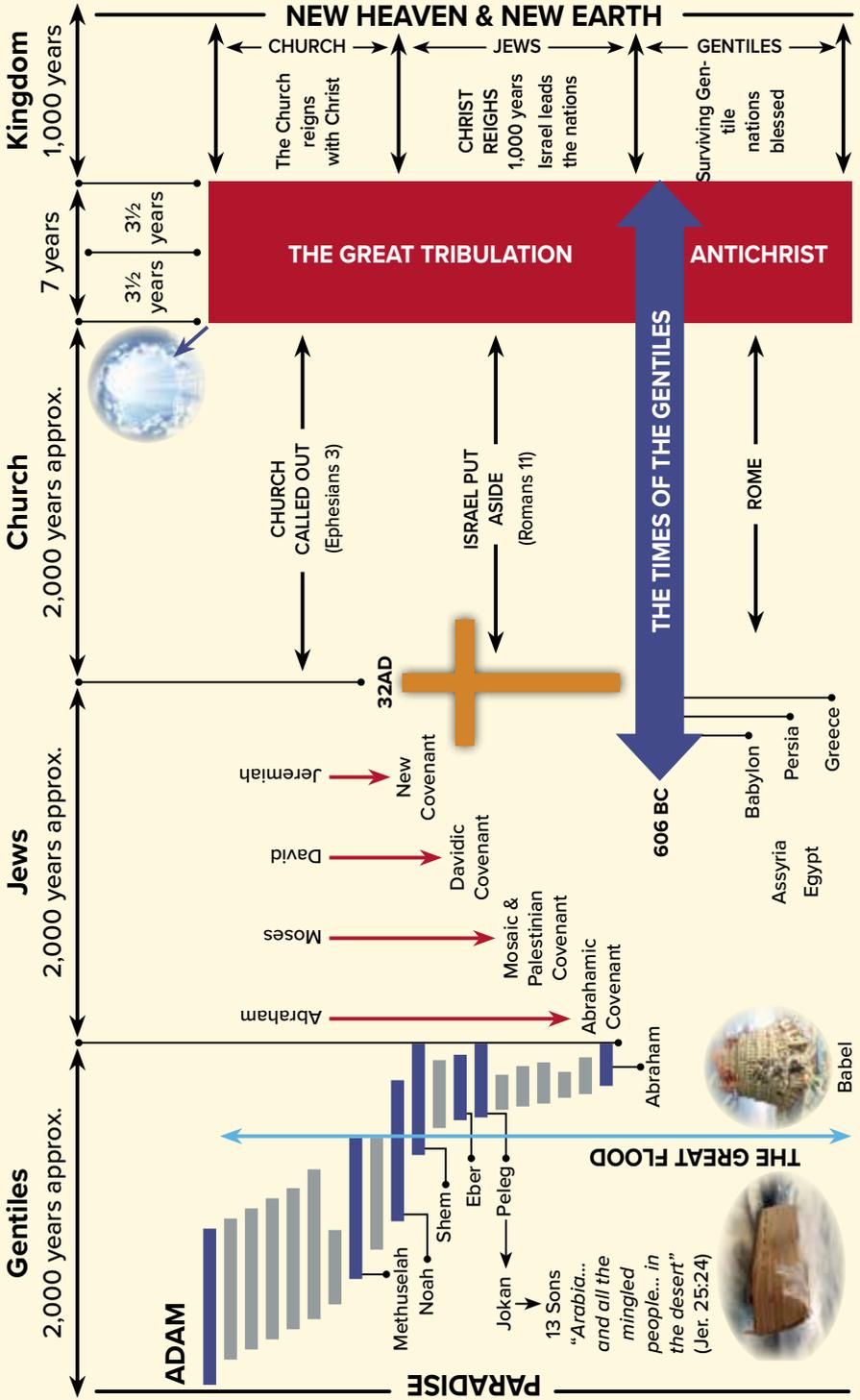
BASICS OF BIBLE PROPHECY



by John R. Ecob DD

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Jew, Gentile & Church Throughout Time



THE BASICS OF BIBLE PROPHECY



Prepared by
John R Ecob D.D.
for the Herald of Hope Inc.

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About this Book

AS THE name implies, “The Basics of Bible Prophecy” provides a simplified presentation of the main elements of the prophetic Scriptures. There are six sections designed to lead the student of God’s Word through the following subjects:

- 1) The Seven Dispensations of Time.
- 2) The 70 “Weeks” Prophecy of Israel’s History (Dan.9:24-27).
- 3) The Times of the Gentiles (Daniel chapters 2 & 7).
- 4) The Russian/Muslim Alliance, which is used of God to bring Israel to repentance (Ezekiel chapters 38 & 39, Joel 2).
- 5) Signs of the Last Days.
- 6) The Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ.

This publication is an extension of the ministry of the Herald of Hope, a bi-monthly Australian-based Bible prophecy magazine standing for the pretribulation rapture of the Church, and the premillennial return of the Lord Jesus Christ. Since 1948 the magazine has provided Bible exposition and testimonies of personal salvation, teaching on prophetic subjects, and comment on international events as they relate to Last Days prophecies.

An expanded version of over 400 pages has been published under the title of “The Bible Prophecy Handbook” and is available at cost from the manager. Email address: manager@heraldofhope.org.au

The Editor may be contacted at:

Herald of Hope,

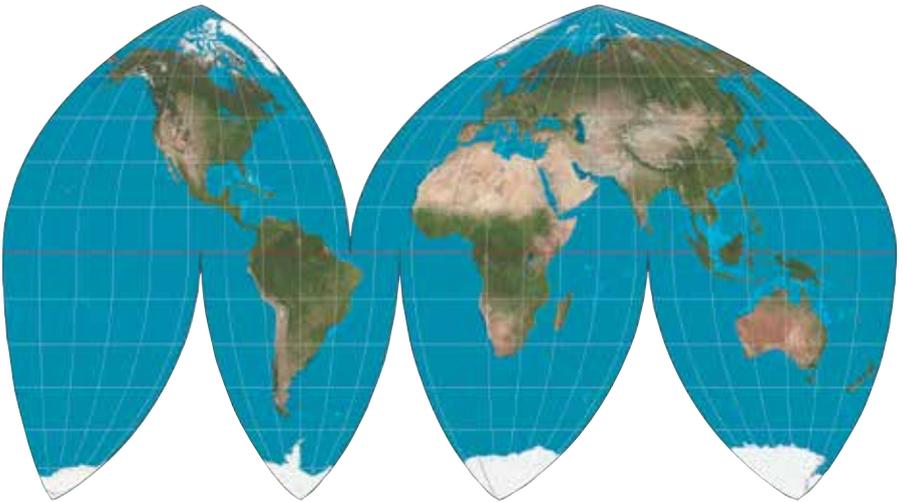
P.O. Box 4216 Marayong, NSW 2148, AUSTRALIA

Email address: editor@heraldofhope.org.au

www.heraldofhope.org.au

Section 1

The Seven Dispensations of Time



*“Study to shew thyself approved unto God,
a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,
RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH”
(2 Tim. 2:15).*

Introduction

THE Bible must be interpreted literally in every sense of the word. From Genesis chapter 1 to Revelation chapter 22, it should be approached as the words of God, infallibly inspired and preserved by the Holy Spirit. God said what He meant, and meant what He said.

To understand God's prophetic Word it is necessary to -

- i) Adopt the literal principle of Biblical interpretation.
- ii) Distinguish between the Jew, the Gentile, and the Church.
- iii) Recognise the seven dispensations (administrations) of time.

Where symbols are used in the Bible, these are understood within their context and the meaning becomes evident as Scripture is compared with Scripture. The Bible interprets its own symbols.

There are no myths and legends in the Bible. It is historical and factual. The characters of the Bible were real people moving across the stage of time, and the places were real places. Miracles were not the norm but the exception, and occurred through Divine intervention in the affairs of men. They defy human explanation and must be accepted in a factual sense.

Similarly, prophecy must be interpreted in its literal sense. Israel, the nations, and the Church, must not be confused. What was promised to Israel as a nation will be fulfilled and cannot be applied to the Church. To fail to distinguish between the Jew, the Gentile, and the Church, will only lead to confusion.

Finally, God's administration can be seen in seven distinct dispensations of time, each beginning with a new opportunity and ending in utter failure and deserved judgment. We live in the latter days of the sixth dispensation and observe a world about to experience the Great Tribulation judgments.

When the last dispensation is completed at the end of Christ's millennial kingdom, time will be no more, and the saved of all ages will enter the eternal blessedness of the new heaven and new earth, when

"all things shall be subdued unto him...that God may be all in all"
(1 Cor. 15:28).

PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

The importance of adopting sound principles of Biblical interpretation cannot be overstated. The Bible is not a "lucky dip" from which isolated

verses can be taken and interpreted out of context. Peter tells us that

“no prophecy of scripture is of any private interpretation” (2 Pet. 1:20).

Every Scripture must be understood in its literal, historical and textual context. It must agree with other Scriptures bearing on the same subject. It cannot have an isolated meaning, for God has confirmed every truth in His Word with multiple witness.

The Bible is the oldest book in the world, it being over 3,500 years since Moses wrote the first five books and Moses incorporated more ancient records, including the *“The generations of the heavens and earth”* (Gen. 2:4) given by God to Adam, *“the book of the generations of Adam”* (Gen. 5:1), of Noah, Shem, Terah, Ishmael, Isaac Esau, and Jacob (Gen. 6:9; 10:1; 11:10,27; 25:12,19; 36:1,9; 37:1). To be able to find a reliable, continuous genealogy from Adam to Christ, spanning 4,000 years, is no mean feat. There is no equal in the records of antiquity.

The explanation for such a phenomenon can only be found in its source, for the Bible claims to be the words of God given by Divine inspiration (God breathed) as holy men of God were moved (carried along) by the Holy Spirit. For this reason the Bible can rightly claim to be the words of the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:16; Acts 28:25), using the mouths of the prophets. As a consequence the Bible is infallible, inerrant, and complete.

Proofs of the inerrancy of the Bible are legion. However, nowhere can its incredible Divine origins be better demonstrated than in its prophetic pronouncements. Foreknowledge is a unique attribute of God, who says,

“I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure” (Isa. 46:9-10).

Many prophecies of the Bible have already been fulfilled in remarkable fashion. At least 33 prophecies were fulfilled in one day - the day Christ died!

The mighty empires of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, and Greece, all rose and fell as foretold by the Bible. The cities of Tyre, Nineveh, Sodom, Babylon, and Jerusalem, were all destroyed in precisely the manner foretold in the Bible!

Since so many prophecies have already been fulfilled, we believe that those which are yet future will just as assuredly be fulfilled.

THE JEW, THE GENTILE, AND THE CHURCH

There are three divisions in the human race in relation to God's dealings with mankind. They are clearly stated by the Apostle Paul.

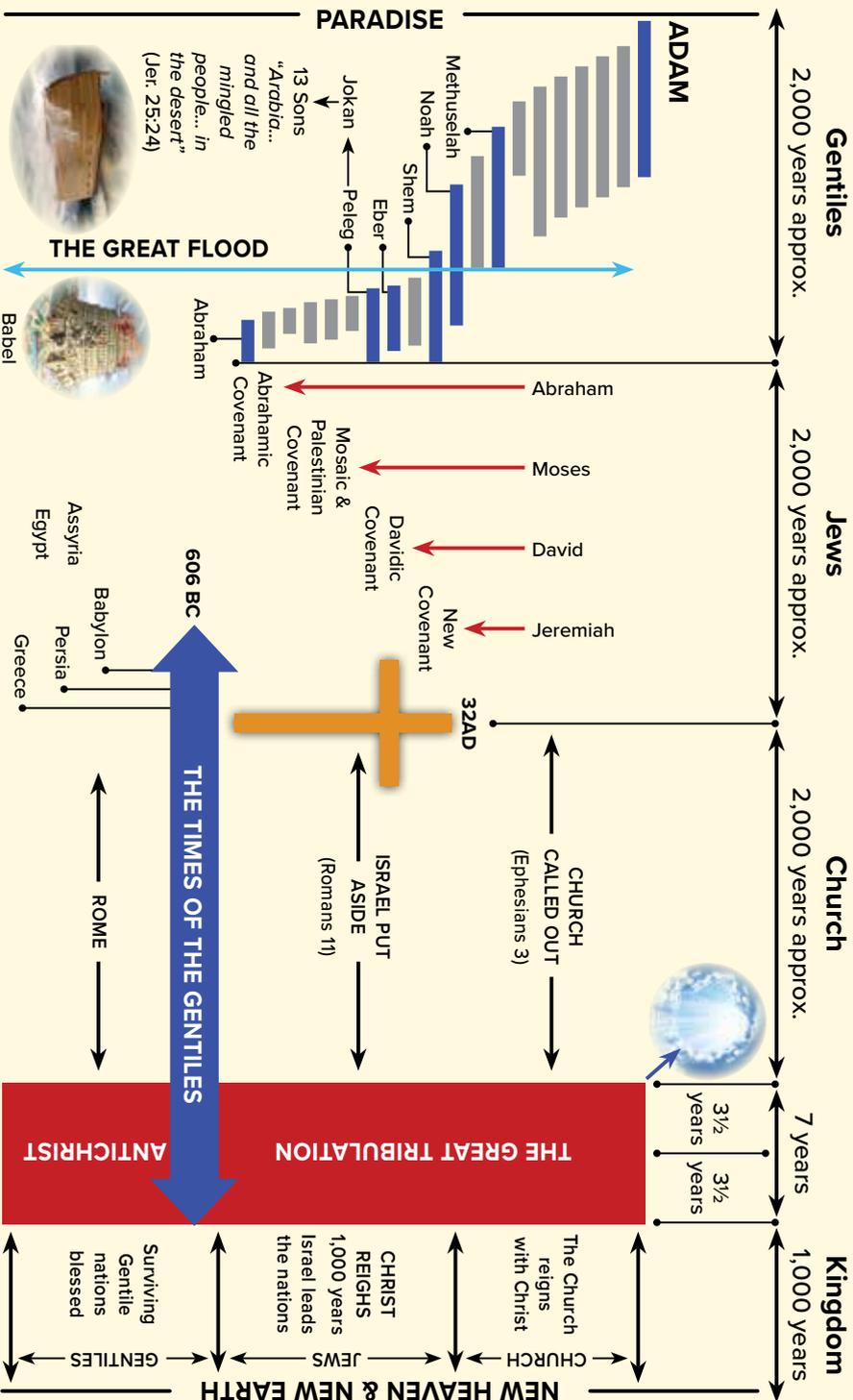
*"Give none offence, neither to the **JEW**s, nor to the **GENTILES**, nor to the **CHURCH OF GOD**" (1 Cor. 10:32).*

Failure to differentiate between these peoples renders accurate interpretation of prophetic Scriptures impossible. Since the days of Abraham there have been **JEW**s and **GENTILES**, but since the day of Pentecost to our present time a third category has been introduced by God; it is the **CHURCH**.

Special attention will be given to God's program for the Jew in Section 2 - *"The 70 Weeks of Jerusalem and Israel,"* and to the Gentiles in Section 3 - *"The Times of the Gentiles."* The Church will feature in Section 6 - *"The Revelation of Jesus Christ,"* as we see its history outlined in the letters to the seven Churches of Asia. The study of the seven dispensations provides an **overview of all three groups**, and the following diagrams show their place in history.



Jew, Gentile & Church Throughout Time



THE SEVEN DISPENSATIONS OF TIME

There are seven clearly defined periods of history from Adam to the end of time, and these are known as the “SEVEN DISPENSATIONS.”

A “dispensation” may be defined as, “an age, or **a period of time**, in which God worked with and through a particular person or people for the blessing of mankind”. In the Old Testament such periods of time are sometimes described as “*generations*” (Ps. 100:5), and in the New Testament as “*ages*” or “*the world*”(Heb. 9:26; Gal. 1:4).

God’s **administration** of the human race has varied over its 6,000 years of history. In the Epistle to the Ephesians we read of “*the ages to come*,” “*other ages*,” and “*all ages*” (Eph. 2:7; 3:5,21). The Epistle to the Colossians speaks of “*ages and generations*”(Col. 1:26). The disciples asked Jesus, “*What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?*”(literally, **age**) (Matt. 24:3).

The history of the world, is the story of man given from God’s perspective. History is punctuated with times of Divine intervention when the human race came under specific judgments. After each judgment God adjusted His administration over human affairs, but under every administration man has utterly failed.

To rightly divide the Word of Truth (2 Tim. 2:15) it is therefore essential to recognise the different ways that God has administered His Truth in His revelation to man. The seven dispensations of time are as follows:

- 1) **The Age of Innocence** -Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.
- 2) **The Age of Conscience** - From Eden to Noah’s Flood.
- 3) **The Age of Human Government** - From the Flood to the Tower of Babel.
- 4) **The Age of Promise** (Covenants) -From Abram to the Exodus.
- 5) **The Age of Law** - From the Exodus to Christ.
- 6) **The Church Age** - From Pentecost to the Rapture.
- 7) **The Kingdom Age** - From the Second Coming of Christ to the New Heaven and New Earth.

1ST DISPENSATION - THE AGE OF INNOCENCE GEN. 1 TO 3

When God created Adam and Eve He placed them in the Garden of Eden. Daily, God walked and talked with Adam and Eve in unbroken fellowship. We are told very little about life in the Garden of Eden, but it is clear that fellowship with God was unbroken and the whole of the creation, ie flora and

The Seven Dispensations

(Administrations of Time)

ETERNITY PAST

1
Innocence
(Gen. 2 & 3)

Adam cast out

2
Conscience
(Gen. 4 - 8)

3
Government
(Gen. 9 - 11)

Babel judged

4
Promise
(Gen. 12 - 50)

Israel enslaved

5
Law
(Exod. 1 - Acts 1)

606BC

6
Church
(Acts 2 - Rev. 3)

Israel put aside temporarily (Rom. 11)

32AD Israel scattered Christendom in Tribulation

7
3 1/2 yrs
7 Years
Great Tribulation
(Rev. 6 - 18)

Israel repents The Beast reigns

Rapture of the Church
(Rev.4)



Bema Seat

Marriage Supper of the Lamb

Christ returns to reign
(Rev.19)



7
1,000 Years
Kingdom on Earth
(Rev.20:1 - 9)

Christ reigns Nations judged Unsaved judged

(Rev. 21 & 22)

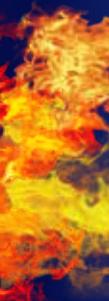
THE NEW HEAVEN & NEW EARTH

THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES

Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles (Luke 21: 24)



Noah's Flood



The Lake of Fire
(Rev. 20:10-15)

fauna, was in harmony with its Creator. Sickness and death were unknown, and man was given “*dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing... upon the earth*” (Gen. 1:28).

Full provision was made for man and the animals. God said to Adam, “*Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed...and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food*”(Gen. 1:29).

Adam was not idle. God planted a garden and appointed Adam “*to dress it and to keep it*”(Gen. 2:15). Adam was the first gardener, and he enjoyed every fruit that grew in the garden with one exception - the tree of “*knowledge of good and evil*”.

Through Satan’s deception Eve, and then Adam, disobeyed the Divine command and ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. At that moment sin entered the human race and fellowship with God was broken. Mankind experienced guilt and became conscious of good and evil.

Furthermore, the whole of creation came under the curse of sin “*for thy (Adam’s) sake*”(Gen. 3:17). The earth brought forth “*thorns and thistles*” and Adam and Eve were driven out of the garden, but not before God slew animals to make “*coats of skins, and clothed them*” (Gen. 3:21). Cherubims and a flaming sword guarded the way to the tree of life.

The coats of skins involved the death of animals, signifying that the wages of sin is death and that only a substitutionary death could avert judgment for sin. Adam’s sinful nature has been passed on to all men,

“*For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one (Christ) shall many be made righteous*” (Rom. 5:19).

Jesus Christ “*became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross,*” so that we might be clothed, not in coats of skins, but in the righteousness of the Lamb of God!

Thus the Age of Innocence begins with blessing, ends in judgment, and displays the grace of God in providing an atonement (a covering) for sin.

2ND DISPENSATION - THE AGE OF CONSCIENCE GEN. 4 TO 8

After Adam was expelled from the Garden of Eden, provision was made for fellowship with God but this involved the death of a substitute. A lamb was prescribed, and soon we read of Cain and Abel bringing offerings to God.

Cain steadfastly refused to shed the blood of a lamb and thus was rejected by God. After refusing to shed the blood of a lamb as a sin offering (Gen.

4:7) he slew his brother, and thereafter violence characterised the Age of Conscience, till we read,

“The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence”
(Gen 6:11).

The civilisation before the Flood was cultured and skilled in the manufacture of musical instruments and implements of iron, brass and gold. We read of the sons of Lamech in the line of Cain, that his son Jubal *“was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ”* (Gen 4:21), and Jubal’s brother Tubal-cain *“was an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron”* (Gen4:22). Such skills indicate an advanced cultural and industrial society.

In 1922 Sir Leonard Woolley led an archeological dig for the British Museum at Ur, where Abram had lived. He found beneath an 8-foot thick layer of clay a golden helmet or wig of the most exquisite design, together with many other artifacts. These items from ancient graves predated the Flood and testify to the amazing skills of the antediluvian civilisation.

Sir Leonard observed:

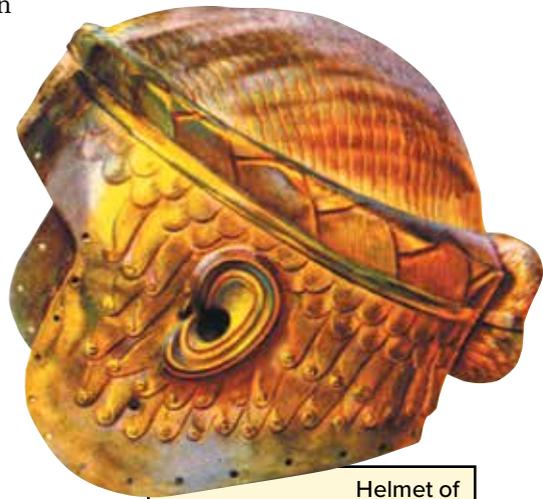
“In no single grave has there been any figure of a god, any symbol or ornament that strikes one as being of a religious nature.”

The antediluvian civilisation was materialistic and sensual, and Jesus said of the days before the Flood:

“They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away” (Matt. 24:38-39).

Genesis chapter 6 paints the grim picture as follows:

“Men began to multiply on the face of the earth...they took them wives of all which they chose...every imagination of the thoughts of his (man’s) heart was only evil continually...The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence” (Gen. 6:1-2,5,11).



Helmet of gold from the tomb of a Prince at Ur of the Chaldees

In the midst of such wickedness there was one man, Noah, who “*found grace in the eyes of the Lord*” (Gen 6:8), and when the universal flood covered the earth he, and those who entered the ark with him, were saved from the wrath of God.

Thus the second dispensation shows that the knowledge of right and wrong does not save, and concludes with Divine judgment. Only by the grace (undeserved favour) of God, through faith, can anyone be saved.

3RD DISPENSATION - THE AGE OF GOVERNMENT GEN. 4 TO 11.

There is no mention of kings or kingdoms before the Flood. The Bible simply speaks of “*mighty men which were of old, men of renown*” (Gen. 6:4). However after the Flood we have the first mention of a kingdom; Nimrod, the son of Cush, is described as “*a mighty one in the earth*” and “*a mighty hunter before the LORD*” (Gen. 10:8,11).

We also read that

“The beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar” (Gen. 10:10).

Another man, Asshur, from the godly line of Shem,

“built Nineveh, and the city of Rehoboth and Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah: the same is a great city” (Gen. 10:11-12).

The place names given in the 10th chapter of Genesis are familiar to students of ancient history, because secular history acknowledges that the earliest traces of civilisation are to be found in the “fertile crescent” which stretched from the Persian Gulf down the Euphrates valley and south along the coast of Israel (Canaan) into Egypt. This area is referred to as the “cradle of civilisation.” We know that the ancient Akkadian and Sumerian kingdoms flourished in the land of Shinar, between the two rivers Euphrates and Tigris, and the Egyptian Pharaohs ruled over the Nile.

When we remember that the Ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat at the headwaters of the Euphrates and Tigris, we expect that some of the descendants of Noah would travel down the Euphrates valley to the fertile plain of Shinar, while others would move south to the lush well-watered Nile Delta. The fact that Nimrod built the city of Accad gives us a connection with the Akkadian kingdom. Cities such as Babel, Ur, Erech, and Nineveh, and the land of Shinar, appear frequently in text books on ancient history. Even the date attributed to the first Akkadian king, Sargon, agrees with Bible chronology.

The Epic (poem) of Gilgamesh who lived some time after the Flood in the city of Erech tells the story of an evil man who claims to have talked with Noah but who was partly human and partly a god. After his death he was worshipped.

Prof J H Breasted, in his book *Ancient Times*, states:

“About 2,500 BC there arose in Akkad a Semite chieftain named Sargon ...the first great Semitic leader in history” (Page 159).

After the Flood a number of changes occurred. First, mankind’s dominion over the entire animal kingdom was reaffirmed. We read,

“The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth... fowl...and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered” (Gen. 9:2).

Next, all animals were given to mankind for food, but eating of blood was forbidden. In Gen 9:4 we read,

“But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.”

Then authority was given to the new civil powers to execute judgment on evil doers.

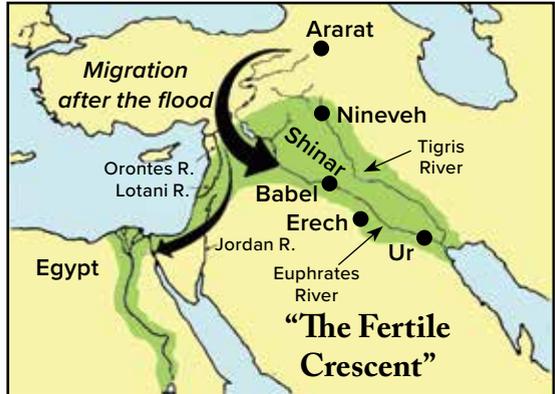
*“Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, **by man** shall his blood be shed”* (Gen. 9:6).

This command stands in contrast to the Divine command that Cain, the first murderer, was **not to be slain** by human hand. God said,

“Whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold” (Gen. 4:15).

Finally, God established His covenant with Noah, **and his descendants after him**, that He would never again destroy the earth with a flood. The rainbow was given as the token, or evidence of the covenant.

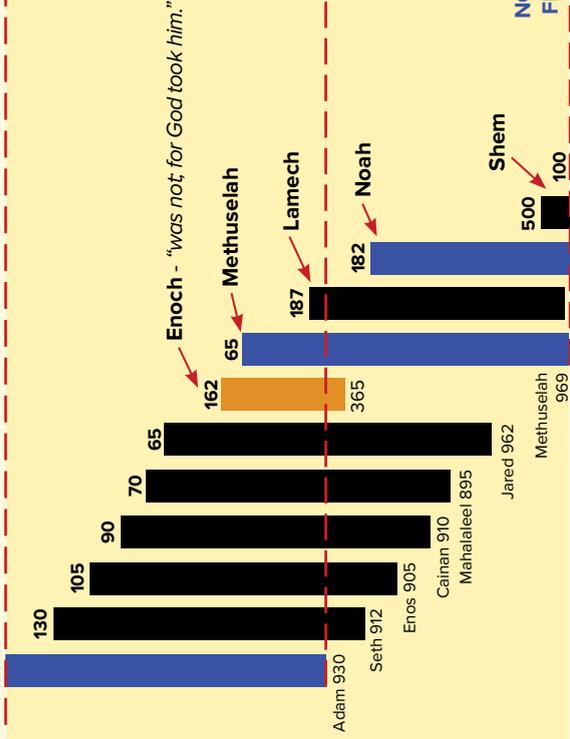
Sadly, the new power bestowed on man was abused, and idolatrous practices were used to control the people. The centre of this idolatry was the Tower of Babel *“whose top was unto heaven”* (Gen 11:4), ie the worship of the sun, moon and stars; it was the beginning of astrology and the superstition of the “Signs of the Zodiac.”



GARDEN OF EDEN

AGE OF INNOCENCE

Adam ← 6 Days of Creation



Enoch - "was not, for God took him."

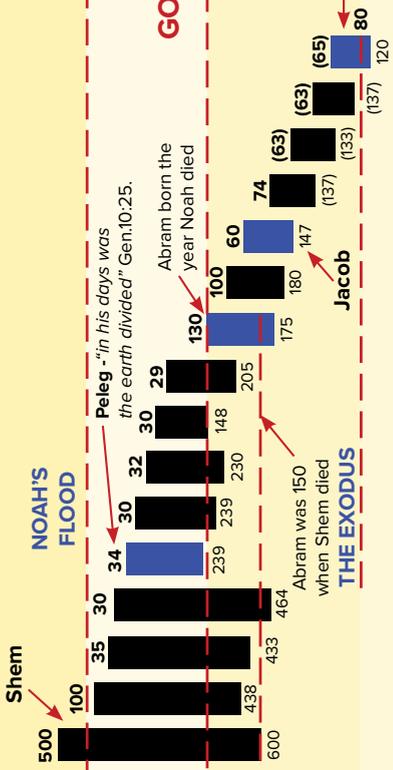
AGE OF CONSCIENCE

NOTE:

The length of each bar in the chart represents the age of a patriarch drawn to scale.
 A horizontal line drawn at any point indicates those alive at any one time.
 From Adam to the Flood was 1,656 years. Gen.ch.5.

NOAH'S FLOOD

Peleg - "in his days was the earth divided" Gen.10:25.
 Abram born the year Noah died



THE TOWER OF BABEL

Peleg had a brother Joktan who had 13 sons - Arabian Princes

430 YEARS OF SOJOURN from Abram's 75th year Israel 2'15 years in Egypt (4 Generations) Gen.15:16

THE EXODUS

Abram was 150 when Shem died
 Jacob

AGE OF GOVERNMENT

AGE OF PROMISE

Moses

The Bible tells us that Terah, the father of Abram, “*served other gods*”(Josh 24:2,14), and Jewish tradition recorded in the Talmud states that Abram had to flee to Shem because Nimrod had ordered his death for destroying Terah’s idols. There is an ancient tradition that Nimrod was finally put to death by Shem for his idolatry, and thereafter a priestly system was set up by his wife, Semiramis, who produced an illegitimate child and instituted the worship of “the mother and child.” This has come down to us in the idolatrous worship of Mary and the baby Jesus!

It is only to be expected that such idolatry would bring Divine judgment. The construction of the Tower of Babel was intended to unite all people, “*lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth!*” (Gen. 11:4); so God confounded their language and “*from thence did the Lord scatter them upon the face of all the earth*” (Gen. 11:8-9). Thus the earth was divided in the days of Peleg and construction on the Tower of Babel ceased (Gen. 10:25).

The Age of Government began with a Covenant and ended in confusion. The time had come for God to work through a new channel.

4TH DISPENSATION - THE AGE OF PROMISE GEN. 12 TO 50

Abram lived in Ur of the Chaldees, which, according to history text books, was the leading city in the Plain of Shinar for many years. Ur was situated on the Euphrates River and had harbours for ships, as shown in the following map. Prof. J H Breasted writes:

“The period of the kings of Sumer and Akkad (beginning about 2,300 BC) may be summed up as more than a century of prosperity under the leadership of Ur, followed by two centuries of decline under the successors of Ur...The power and splendour of Ur in this age were never forgotten” (*Ancient Times* pages 163 & 166).

Ur was therefore the royal city and, as the map shows, had royal tombs. Much of the city of Ur was occupied by a pagan temple and hence we can understand how Abram’s father, Terah, became involved in idolatry as stated in Joshua 24:2. The Jewish Talmud, quoting Jewish tradition, even says that Terah was Nimrod’s right-hand man.

According to the Talmud, Abram became disillusioned with the worship of the sun, moon, and stars. Since he could not pray to the sun at night or the stars during the day, he judged that they were useless to him as his gods. Consequently he smashed the idols of his father, Terah, and fled to Shem the son of Noah for protection. Abram’s departure from Ur was in response to a

command from the LORD. The Biblical record simply states:

*“The LORD **had said** unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee ...and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 12:1-3).*

The Age of Promise is also the age of the patriarchs. It began with Abram and traces the sojourning of Abram, Isaac, Jacob (Israel), and the 12 patriarchs, the sons of Jacob, whose families became the twelve tribes of the nation of Israel. During this age the patriarchs did **not possess** the land of Canaan given to Abram as Heb. 11:9 -16 indicates,

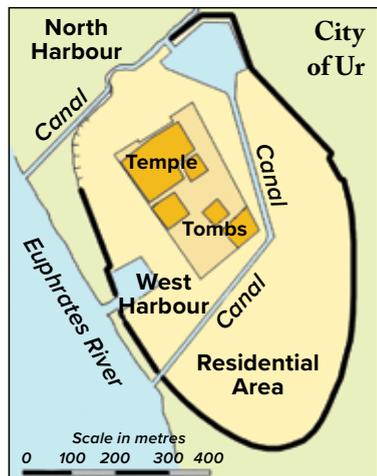
*“These all died in faith, **not** having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them ...and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.”*

At this time God made promises (covenants) with Abraham and confirmed them to Isaac (Gen. 26:1-5) and Jacob (Gen. 27:28-29; 28:4,13-15; 35:9-12). These promises, known as the **Abrahamic Covenant**, stated:

- i) God would bless Abraham and make “a great nation” of him (Gen. 12:1-3; 22:15-18).
- ii) All who blessed Abraham and his seed would be blessed, and all who cursed his seed would be cursed (Gen. 12:3).
- iii) God would give to Abraham, and to his seed after him, all the land “from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates” for an “everlasting possession” (Gen. 13:14-18; 15:18 -19; 17:8).
- vi) In Abraham’s seed (Christ) all families of the earth would be blessed (Gen 22:18); “and to thy seed, which is Christ” (Gal 3:16).
- v) Abraham would become the “father of many nations”(Gen. 17:5).

Sadly, the Dispensation of Promise ends in failure. Joseph was sold as a slave into Egypt by his brothers, and 22 years later the 12 families follow, ultimately to become Pharaoh’s slaves themselves.

We should remember that God knew what would happen and had informed Abraham



in advance. In Gen. 15:13-16 God told Abram:

“Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years... But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.”

A CASE OF FULFILLED PROPHECY

The **sojourning** of the seed of Abraham was 430 years, from the day of Abram’s departure from Haran for Canaan (Exod. 12:40-41), to the day of Israel’s escape under the leadership of Moses at the Exodus.

Of the 430 years, there were **400 years of affliction** at the hands of the Egyptians who controlled all of Canaan. Only for 30 years, while Joseph was in favour with Pharaoh, was there any respite. After *“there arose a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph,”* persecution resumed (Exod. 1:8).

The final part of the prophecy indicated that the seed of Abram would be a stranger in a land which was not theirs (Egypt), but in **the fourth generation** they would **return to the land of Canaan** (Gen. 15:16). An examination of the chronological chart on page 12 will indicate that Abram’s descendants were 215 years in the land of Egypt, and that the “four generations” in Egypt were Levi, Kohath, Amram and Moses (Exod. 6:16-20).

While the Israelites were slaves in Egypt through their own folly, and that they could not possess the land given to Abraham until 400 years of affliction were completed but it was also because *“the iniquity of the Amorites (who possessed the land of Canaan) was not yet full”* (Gen. 15:16). Here we see the patience and longsuffering of God, who would not permit the Amorites to be judged **until** they had sealed their doom by hardening their hearts. Once the Amorites had filled the cup of their iniquity Divine justice permitted judgment to be executed: God did this by the sword of Joshua.

Like all other dispensations, the Age of Promise began with a new administration and new opportunities, but ended in failure and slavery. No matter how God chooses to administer the affairs of this world, man will always prove a failure. The wonder is that God persists; but He is *“the God of all grace!”* (1 Pet. 5:10).

5TH DISPENSATION - THE AGE OF LAW EXOD 1 TO ACTS 1

The period from Moses to Christ constitutes the fifth Divine administration under which mankind has lived. It begins with a fresh revelation of God and great manifestations of His power in the land of

Egypt. In their bondage, Israel cried out to God and their cry was heard. Moses was sent to deliver Israel from the power of Pharaoh. Ten plagues were sent on Egypt, and finally Pharaoh allowed Israel to leave. Many signs and wonders occurred. The pillar of cloud and fire went before them day and night; the Red Sea opened to allow the people to cross dryshod; water was provided in the desert; bread (manna) was sent daily and God manifested His presence on Mt Sinai. After 40 years the Jordan ceased to flow at a time when it was in flood allowing Israel to cross dry shod into the promised land. Finally, the walls of Jericho collapsed as the priests of the LORD sounded their trumpets.

At the beginning of the Age of Law God gave Israel the Ten Commandments; sanitary, food, and moral laws; a new calendar of annual feasts, a tabernacle, sacrifices and offerings administered by priests who were in effect a spiritual civil service supported by the taxes (tithes) of God's people.

The Age of Law was also a time when God chose, out of all the nations, **one nation** to be the channel of revelation. The Old Testament Scriptures were written during this period, and its prophecies reach down to the end of time.

The history of Israel throughout the Age of Law may be studied in the chart on page 18. Over a period of 1,500 years, Israel passed through the wilderness, conquered the land of Canaan, was ruled over by judges, kings and Gentiles. When the Babylonians captured Jerusalem in 606 BC, Gentile occupation began and Jesus described it as the "*times of the Gentiles*". This period of Jerusalem's history will conclude when the Son of David, the Lord Jesus Christ, comes again to "*restore again the kingdom to Israel*" (Acts 1:6), establish His millennial kingdom and reign from the throne of David (Luke 21:24).

God's choice of the nation of Israel was the fulfilment of His promises to Abraham that the seed of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, were entitled to claim all the blessings bound up in the Abrahamic Covenant.

No nation on the face of the earth has ever experienced what Israel has seen. Moses made this clear in Deut. 4:32-39.

*"Ask now of the days that are past... since the day that God created man upon the earth... did ever people **hear the voice of God** speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live? Or hath **God assayed to go and take him a nation** from the midst of another nation, by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the LORD your God did for you in*

*Egypt...? Out of heaven he made thee to **hear his voice**, that he might instruct thee...**thou heardest his words** out of the midst of the fire."*

The **Abrahamic Covenant** was God's contract with Israel and He will always honour it, but whether Israel **enjoys the blessings** of the Covenant depends on her obedience to God's law. This principle is clearly stated in the **Palestinian Covenant** recorded in Deuteronomy chs 28 to 30, and God will never break His Covenant (Lev. 26:44). The **Palestinian Covenant** stated three things:

1) If Israel obeyed the LORD, then God would bless them in accordance with the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant.

*"If thou wilt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments...**all these blessings shall come on thee**...and he shall bless thee **IN THE LAND**...The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself...and all people of the earth...shall be afraid of thee. And the LORD shall make thee plenteous in goods...**IN THE LAND** which the LORD sware unto thy fathers to give thee" (Deut. 28:1-14).*

2) If Israel disobeyed the LORD, they would come under the chastening hand of God and be driven out of the land which God promised to Abraham and his seed for ever:

"If thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD...all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:

a) *"the LORD shall bring thee, and thy king which thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known."*

b) *"the LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far, **from the end of the earth**...whose tongue thou shalt not understand...he shall besiege thee...and the LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other...and among these nations shalt thou find no ease..." (Deut. 28:15-68; 29:1-29).*

3) If, after Israel was scattered, they turned back to God, then God would keep His promise and bestow upon the nation all of the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant.

*"When all these things are come upon thee... and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee, and **shall return unto the LORD thy God**, and shalt obey his voice... the LORD thy God will...have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations...and the LORD thy **God shall bless thee***

The Age of Law

Descendants of **JAPHETH**
Gen 10:2-5

Gomer (Caucasus)
Magog, Meshech & Tubal (Russia)
Ashkenaz & Madai (Medes/Central Asia)
Togarmah (Turkey)
Javan (Greece)
Kittim (Italy)
Tarshish (Britain)

The above are predominantly European and Slavic nations

Descendants of **HAM**
Gen 10:6-20

Cush (Ethiopia and Babylon)
Mizraim (Egypt)
Phut & Ludim (Africa)
Sheba & Dedan (Arabia)

Canaan (Canaanites)
Sidón, Heth, Jebusites, Amorites
Casluhim & Caphortorim (Philistines)

Descendants of **SHEM to ABRAM**

40 years in wilderness
Conquest of Canaan under Joshua

Othneil
Ehud
Shamgar
Barak
Gideon
Abimelech
Tola
Jair
Jephthah
Ibzan
Elon
Abdon
Samson
Eli
Samuel
Saúl
David
Solomón

15 JUDGES

Greece/Rome

EGYPTIAN EMPIRE (Descendants of Ham)

ASSYRIAN EMPIRE (Descendants of Shem)

Southern Kingdom of Judah

Rehoboam
Abijam
Asa

Jehoshaphat
Joram
Ahaziah
Joash
Amaziah (Uzziah)

Jotham
Ahaz
Hezekiah
Manasseh
Amon
Josiah
Jehoahaz
Jehoiakim
Jehoiachin
Zedekiah

Jeroboam
Nadab
Baasha
Elah
Zimri
Omri
Ahab
Ahaziah
Joram
Jehu
Jehoahaz
Joash
Jeroboam II
Zachariah
Shallum
Menahem
Pekahiah
Pekah
Hoshea

Northern Kingdom of Samaria

721 BC

ASSYRIAN CAPTIVITY OF THE NORTHERN KINGDOM

Jonah
Amos
Isaiah
Hosea
Micah

Zephaniah
Nahum
Habakkuk

Jeremiah
Obadiah
Daniel
Ezekiel

Haggai
Zechariah

Joel
Malachi

THE PROPHETS

Samaritans

606BC

BABYLONIAN EMPIRE

569 BC

70 years captivity in Babylon

536BC

PERSIAN EMPIRE

445BC

Temple rebuilt 516BC
Jerusalem rebuilt 396BC

332BC

GRECIAN EMPIRE

63BC

ROMAN EMPIRE

AD32 +

THE CHURCH AGE

7 YEARS OF TRIBULATION

IN THE LAND... which the LORD swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them" (Deut. 30:1-20).

These scriptures describe the three elements of the Palestinian Covenant which is the basis of God's dealings with Israel throughout the Age of Law. Simply stated, it is:

- 1) **Obey**, and they will be blessed **IN THE LAND**.
- 2) **Disobey**, and they will be driven **OUT OF THE LAND**.
- 3) **Repent**, and God will bring them **BACK TO THE LAND**.

It is interesting to note that **two scatterings** of Israel are described. The first scattering would be at a time when **they had a king**. This occurred when the Babylonians took King **Jehoiachin captive to Babylon** in 597BC and Zedekiah in 586BC. The second scattering would be after an awful siege at Jerusalem when the Jews would be dispersed among **all people**, from the one end of the earth to the other. This undoubtedly occurred in AD70 at the hands of **the Romans**, and for nearly 2,000 years the Jews have been scattered around the globe in every nation exactly as described in Deut 28 & 29 ! Other Scriptures indicate that after the Rapture of the Church, Israel will return to the Lord and **again become God's witness on earth in the last days**.

Ezekiel prophesied that Israel's return would be in **two stages**; the first will be a **partial return in unbelief**, as described in Ezekiel chapter 36 and verses 22 and 32, but then all Israel will turn to the Lord during the Tribulation and Christ will bring every last Jew back to the land soon after His return in glory (Ezek. 39:28; Matt. 24:31).

The Age of Law began with a marvellous deliverance out of Egypt but ended with the nation so far from God that it rejected Jesus Christ the Messiah and crucified Him on a Roman cross. In 2016 there were **6.4 million Jews** back in the land, but most are still blind as to who their Messiah is.

When the Jews crucified their King the nation was put aside and God chose a new administration, a new channel to communicate His Truth to the world - the Gentile Church. We will now study the Church Age.

6TH DISPENSATION - THE CHURCH AGE ACTS 2 TO REV. 4

The Church Age began at Pentecost and will be complete at the Rapture. In this age all who turn from their sin to Christ and trust in His redeeming blood for pardon are instantly baptised by the Spirit into the Body of Christ, and are made members of the Church of Jesus Christ, where

*“there is **neither Jew nor Greek**, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are **all one in Christ Jesus**”* (Gal. 3:28). See also Col. 3:11.

Just before Jesus ascended from the Mount of Olives the disciples asked, *“Lord, wilt thou at this time **restore again** the kingdom to Israel?”*

The Lord replied,

“It is not for you to know the times or the seasons... but... ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:6-8).

Evidently the disciples knew nothing about the Church and fully expected the promised Kingdom Age would come as prophesied by the Old Testament prophets. Jesus indicated that the earthly kingdom would be deferred, and that a new dispensation, which included the Gentiles, was about to begin. The gift of tongues was **Gentile languages** spoken at Pentecost as **a sign to Israel** that God was now turning to the Gentiles and Paul confirmed that Israel had been blinded when he quoted from Isaiah’s prophecy (Isa. 6:9-13; Acts 28:25-28). Jesus also confirmed that Isaiah’s prophecy had been fulfilled (Matt. 13:14; John 12:37-41).

We need to be reminded that the Old Testament Scriptures have nothing to say about the Church. Everything we know about the Church is recorded in the New Testament and Paul tells us that the Church was a *“mystery,” “**kept secret since the world began,**” “**hidden in God,**” and was “**not made known unto the sons of men**”* (Eph. 3:1-9; Rom 16:25; Col. 1:24-27).

During the long Age of Law, Israel was God’s witness to the world and Jehovah God was the *“God of Israel”* (Exod 5:1). When a Gentile was converted he turned from his own nation’s gods to the **God of Israel** and identified with Jehovah’s people. The law provided for the converted Gentiles (Lev. 24:22; Num. 9:14; 15:14; Deut. 24:19-21). In Solomon’s day there were 153,600 *“strangers”* (converted Gentiles) in Israel (2 Chron. 2:17).

Paul described the relationship between Israel and the Church during the Church Age, in Romans chapter 11. He likened Israel to the *“natural branch”* of the olive tree, and the Gentiles to a *“wild olive branch”*. The *“natural olive branch”* (Israel) has been broken off and the *“wild olive branch”* (the Gentiles) has been grafted in. Thus he indicates that because of their rejection of the Messiah, Israel has been put aside and the Gentile Church had taken their place as God’s witness in the world. However, when Israel repents of

rejection of Christ, they will be grafted in again:

*“For God is able to graft them in **again**” (Rom. 11:23). “For...blindness in part is happened to Israel, UNTIL the **fulness of the Gentiles** be come in. And **so all Israel shall be saved**: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer ...when I shall take away their (Israel’s) sins” (Rom. 11:25-27).*

When will the “fulness of the Gentiles” come in? The answer is obvious; at the Rapture. When the Gentile bride of Christ (the Church) is **complete** the heavenly Bridegroom will snatch her away, and then will commence the 70th week of **Israel’s history** (Dan. 9:24-27), the “time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jer 30:7), otherwise known as the “great tribulation” (Matt. 24:21,29). **See Section 2.**

In the first half of the 7-year Tribulation Israel will be invaded by an **Islamic army led by Russia** from the north. This northern-led army will include Turkey (Togarmah), Iran (Persia), Libya, and Ethiopia (Biblical Sudan). It will be at this point in time that Israel will trust in the Lord and acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Messiah (Ezek. 39:22). **See Section 4.**

At the beginning of the Great Tribulation Antichrist will arise as a political leader in Europe and confirm a treaty with Israel for 7 years (Dan 9:27), but **halfway through the 7 years** he will break his treaty, and “cause the sacrifice and oblation” in the rebuilt Temple at Jerusalem “to cease”. He will exalt himself and sit in the Temple “showing himself that he is God” (2 Thess. 2:4). **See Section No 2.**

Immediately after the Great Tribulation, Christ will come in glorious power to smite the Antichrist and all the armies of the nations that he will gather against Jerusalem (Matt. 24:29; Rev. 19:11-21; Zech. 14:1-9). The nations that respond to the “Gospel of the kingdom” (Matt. 24:14) preached by the 144,000 Jews during the first half of the Tribulation, and who survive the Tribulation, will **go alive** into Christ’s millennial kingdom which is the 7th Dispensation, or the Kingdom Age.

7TH DISPENSATION - THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM - REV. 20

The seventh dispensation of time is the millennial kingdom which begins with the return of the Lord Jesus Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords, **immediately** after the Great Tribulation (Matt. 24:29); it continues for 1,000 years.

Six times, in Rev 20:1-7, we read of a 1,000-year period during which Satan will be bound and unable to deceive the nations. Also, the martyrs, who

refused the mark of the beast during the Tribulation, will be raised and reign with Christ for 1,000 years.

In Matthew chapter 25 we read that the **saved nations** that **survive the Tribulation** will enter Christ's earthly kingdom:

*"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And **before him shall be gathered all nations**: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats" (Matt. 25:31-32).*

To His sheep, Jesus will say,

*"Come, ye blessed of my Father, **inherit the kingdom** prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt 25:34).*

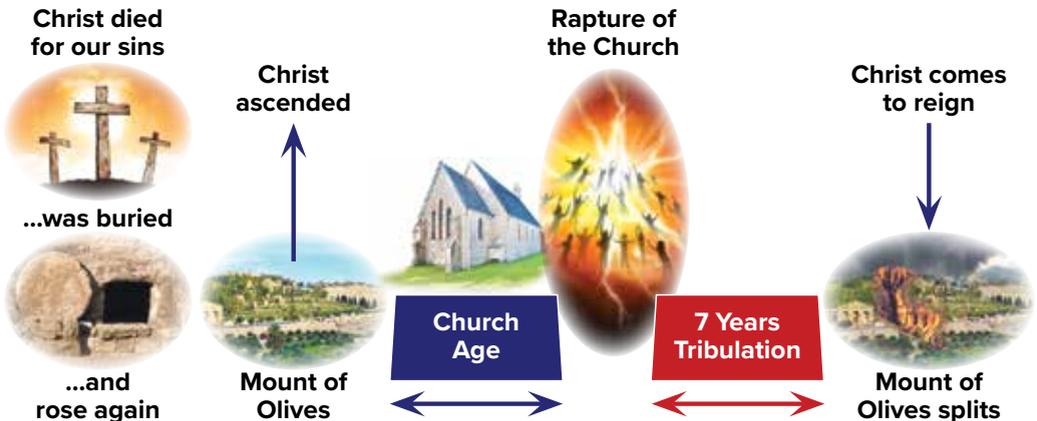
The saved of all nations, who survive the terrors of the Great Tribulation, will therefore go alive into the millennial kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ; but the unsaved, who received the mark of the beast and worshipped the Antichrist during the Tribulation, will be cast into everlasting fire. Jesus will say to them,

"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt 25:41).

The 1,000-year reign of Christ will begin among the debris of Armageddon, and the Psalmist graphically described the scene in Psalm 46:6-10.

"The heathen (nations) raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted. The LORD of hosts is with us (repentant Israel); the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah (think on that!).

From the Cross to the Crown



Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen (nations), I will be exalted in the earth."

At long last the 'Lord's Prayer' will be answered: "*Thy kingdom come!*"

Great changes will take place under the rule of the King of kings. Some changes are listed below:

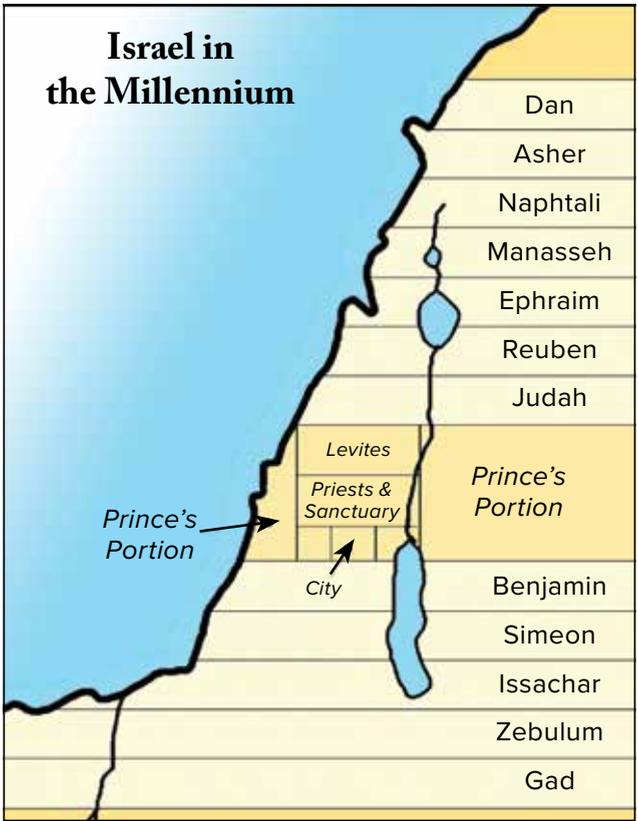
- 1) The Lord will be King over all the earth and will "*rule all nations with a rod of iron*" (Zech. 14:9; Rev. 12:5; Ps. 2:6-12).
- 2) There will be universal peace. "*They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks*" (Isa. 2:4).
- 3) A new millennial Temple of great proportions will be built at Jerusalem, where the glory of God will continually lighten the city (Ezek. 40 to 48; Isa. 60:19-20).
- 4) The nation of Israel will be the "*priests of the LORD*" to administer God's law from Jerusalem (Isa. 61:6 ; Isa. 2:1-5).
- 5) Gentile nations will bring their wealth to Jerusalem and assist in its reconstruction (Isa. 60:5-11).
- 6) Gentile nations will serve Israel, and those who refuse will perish (Isa. 60:12-24).
- 7) Each year the Gentile nations will go up to Jerusalem to "*worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain*" (Zech. 14:16-17).
- 8) The land of Israel will experience abundance of rain, and "*there shall be showers of blessing. And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land...*" (Ezek. 34:26 -27; Isa. 41:18).
- 9) The name of Jerusalem will be changed.
"And the name of the city from that day shall be, Jehovah-Shammah", meaning, "The LORD is there!" (Ezek. 48:35).

While the 1,000-year reign of Christ will begin with only saved Jews and Gentiles to inhabit the earth, their offspring, like every son of Adam before

them, will have sinful natures and unless they personally repent of sin and place their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, they will grow up as unregenerate sinners. Their obedience to Christ's rule will be by compulsion and not out of loving submission. During this time Satan will be bound, so their hardness can only be attributed to the deceitfulness of their own sinful heart (Heb. 3:13).

At the end of the 1,000-year reign of Christ, Satan will be loosed from the bottomless pit to test the genuineness of the obedience of earth's inhabitants; those who have not experienced real conversion will be deceived and will join in revolt against the Lord Jesus.

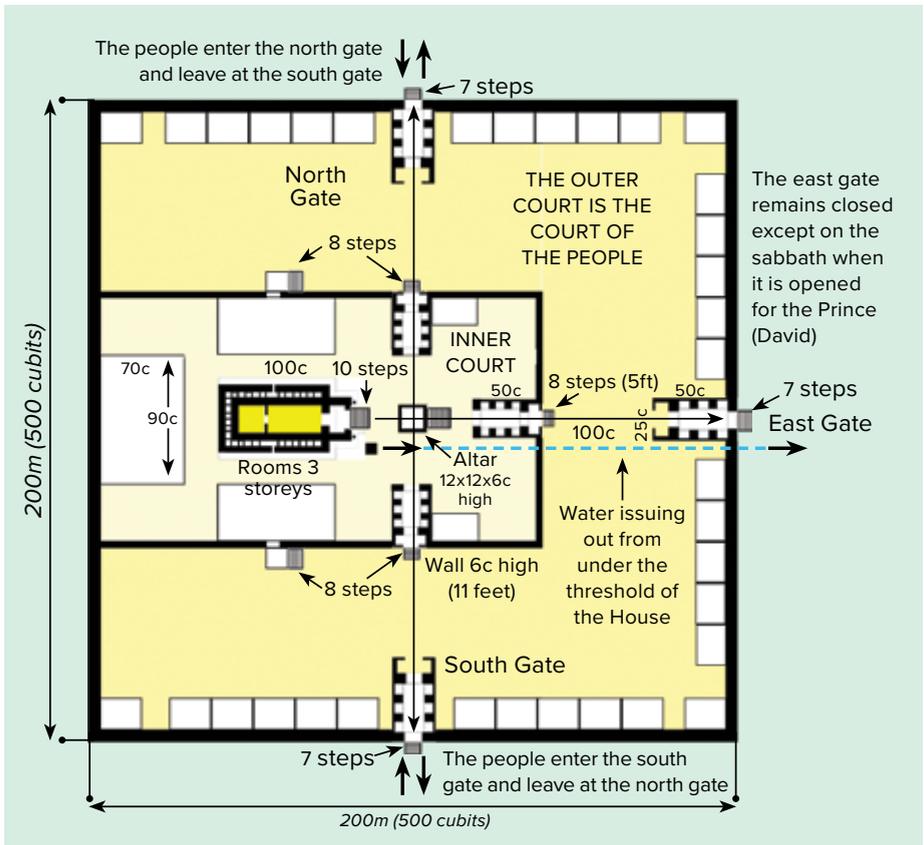
“When the 1,000 years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations... and they went up ...and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city (Jerusalem): and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them” (Rev. 20:7-9).



At the conclusion of the millennial kingdom the **second resurrection** will take place. This is the resurrection of all of **the unsaved of all ages**, from Adam to the end of time. The **first resurrection** is the resurrection of the saved, and the second resurrection is the resurrection of the unsaved. The Bible teaches a “*resurrection of life*” and a “*resurrection of damnation*” (John 5:29).

The second resurrection brings the souls of the unsaved from hades (hell), to appear before the great white throne in resurrection bodies, to receive judgment for the **deeds done in the body**. Their eternal destiny, however, is never in doubt, because in their lifetime they had rejected God’s gracious entreaty and their names were blotted out of the Lamb’s book of life (Rev. 3:5; Exod. 32:33).

Ezekiel’s Millennial Temple - Ezek. chs. 40-42



When the Church is raptured in Rev. 4:3 the rainbow of mercy is seen “*round about the throne,*” but at the second resurrection there is NO RAINBOW (Rev. 20:11) - no mercy!

The first resurrection of the saved is likened to a harvest:

- i) The **firstfruits** included the Old Testament saints who rose with Christ when He took paradise into heaven after His resurrection (Matt. 27:52-53). In 1 Cor. 15:20-23 we read of “*Christ **the firstfruits**; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.*”
- ii) The **main harvest** will occur at the Rapture (1 Thess. 4:13-18). The Church age has a great company who have trusted Christ. World population has been much greater in the Church age also.
- iii) The **gleanings** include the Tribulation saints who die during the seven-year reign of Antichrist (Rev. 20:4-6), and all of the saved at the end of the millennial kingdom. The resurrection is likened to a harvest and in the Old Testament the Israelites were required to leave **gleanings** at the time of harvest for the stranger to gather; we read about this in Lev. 19:9-10:

*“When ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather **the gleanings of thy harvest.** And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard... thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the LORD your God.”*

Finally, there will be a new heaven and new earth, “*for the first heaven and first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.*” John sees the “*new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, as a bride adorned for her husband*” (Rev. 21:1,2).

The bride of the Lamb, the Church, will dwell in the new Jerusalem (Rev. 21:9), redeemed Israel around it (Rev. 21:12), “*and the nations (Gentiles in other ages) of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it*” (Rev. 21:24). Time will have passed forever and we will stand as the objects of redeeming grace on the shores of an eternal day where there is no more sin, death, or sorrow, and GOD IS ALL IN ALL!

The First Resurrection or the Resurrection of Life – John 5:25-29

FIRST FRUITS

All the Old Testament Saints rose with Christ. Paradise was taken to Heaven (Matt. 27:52-53)



Bema Seat and Marriage of the Lamb (2 Cor. 5:10)



2ND COMING
Christ comes
"from the wedding"
(Luke 12:36)

Earth burned and the New Heaven and New Earth for the saved (Rev. 21 & 22)

HARVEST

The Rapture of the Church. Dead "In Christ" Raised and Living Saints changed (1 Thess. 4:13-18, 1 Cor. 15:51-54)

GLEANINGS

Tribulation Martyrs (Rev. 11:12, Rev. 20:4)

GLEANINGS

The "rest of the dead" Living Saints and dead raised and changed (Rev. 20:5)



Dead raised

Dead raised
Living changed

Dead raised

Dead raised
Living changed



The Resurrection to Damnation at the Great White Throne (Rev. 11:25)

Age of Law
Israel "Saviours is of the Jews" (John 2:1)

The Church Age
(Eph. 3:1-10)
"The fullness of the Gentiles" (Rom. 11:25)

7 Years Tribulation
(Matt. 24:7-28)
Israel "The time of Jacob's trouble" (Jer. 30:7)

1,000 Year Reign of Christ on Earth (Rev. 20:1-10)
Israel & Gentiles "I will pour out my spirit upon ALL flesh" (Joel 2:28)

Living Old Testament Saints NOT Raptured but became New Testament Saints (Acts 18)
Paradise where the Old Testament Saints waited for Christ to rise.
(Luke 24:7-28)

The bodies of the unsaved dead in the grave await resurrection to the Great White Throne.

Marriage Supper (Rev. 19:9)

Living Tribulation Saints NOT Raptured but became Millennial Saints (Zech. 14:16, Matt. 25:34)

The everlasting Lake of Fire "Gehennah"

The Great Gulf

Hell ("Hades") - a place of torment where unsaved souls await the Resurrection to Damnation at the Great White Throne.



Section 2

Israel and Jerusalem's 70 "Weeks" of History

"When the LORD shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory"
(Psalm 102:16)



Israel's Amazing "70 Weeks" Prophecy

The most amazing prophecy of God's plan for the nation of Israel is given in just four verses of Daniel chapter 9. It is called "The 70 Weeks Prophecy".

*"Seventy weeks are determined **upon thy people and upon thy holy city**, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.*

*Know therefore and understand, that FROM the going forth of **the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem UNTO the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks**: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.*

*And after (the) threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of **the prince that shall come** shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.*

*And he shall confirm the covenant with many for **one week**: and in the **midst of the week** he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations (idolatry) he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate (desolator)" (Dan. 9:24-27).*

The prophecy begins with the words,

"Seventy weeks (sevens) are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city", i.e. 70 x 7, or 490 years, are determined upon the Jews and Jerusalem...to do six things for them.

- 1) *"to finish the transgression,*
- 2) *to make an end of sins,*
- 3) *to make reconciliation for iniquity,*
- 4) *to bring in everlasting righteousness,*
- 5) *to seal up the vision and prophecy,*
- 6) *to anoint the most Holy" (place).*

The word "week" is literally "sevens" in the Hebrew language and does not refer to a "week" of days. In Dan. 10:2 the expression "three full weeks," i.e. 21 days, is literally "three sevens **of days**" in the Hebrew text. In Dan 9:24-27 it

is simply “sevens”, and we know that they refer to “sevens of years” because much of the prophecy is **already fulfilled**.

Therefore $70 \times 7 = 490$ years are determined on Daniel’s people (**the Jews**) and on Daniel’s holy city (**Jerusalem**) to achieve six things. Please notice that these six things only relate to **the Jews** and **Jerusalem** and not the Church. It is obvious they have **not yet** been entirely fulfilled for the 490 years conclude with “*everlasting righteousness*” experienced by Israel in Christ’s millennial kingdom!

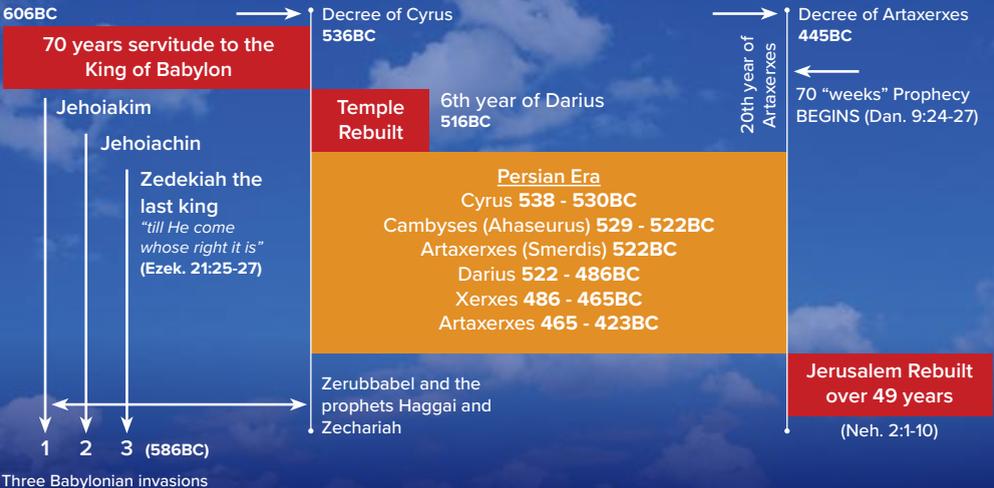
BACKGROUND TO THE PROPHECY

Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon captured Jerusalem three times; first in 606BC during the reign of Jehoiakim; then in 597BC during the short reign of young King Jehoiachin, and finally in 586BC during the reign of Zedekiah. The city and the Temple were destroyed in 586BC.

Daniel was taken to Babylon during the first invasion, and Ezekiel during the second. Jeremiah remained in the land and prophesied against the people because of their idolatry and wickedness. He prophesied that Israel would “*serve the king of Babylon seventy years*” (Jer. 25:11-12; 29:10; Dan. 9:2; Ezra 1:1).

Nebuchadnezzar reigned 43 years - 605 -562BC

Defeated Pharaoh-necho at Carchemish before he became King, 13 years siege of Tyre began in the 7th year of his reign, Egypt invaded in 570BC and left desolate 40 years, 7 years of insanity 569 - 563BC



The 70 years of servitude to the king of Babylon began in 606BC, and concluded in 536BC. After Babylon was overthrown by the Medes and Persians, Cyrus wrote a decree allowing the Temple to be rebuilt.

THE DECREE OF CYRUS

Isaiah had foretold more than 170 years beforehand that Cyrus, the Persian king, would decree the rebuilding of the Temple. This prophecy even gave Cyrus' name before he was born!

*"Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and **I will loose the loins of kings**, to open before him the two leaved gates; and **the gates shall not be shut**; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: And I will give thee **the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places**, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me (Isa 45:1-4).*

*"...That saith of **Cyrus**, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid" (Isa. 44:28).*

The Book of Ezra (chapters 1-6) records details of the decree of Cyrus to rebuild the Temple. Although Cyrus **said** that Jerusalem would be rebuilt, his **decree** only permitted the reconstruction of the **Temple**. The work was completed 20 years later in 516BC amidst opposition from the Samaritans (Ezra 6:15). This, however, is **not the start of the "70 weeks,"** which relates to the reconstruction of the **city of Jerusalem**.

THE DECREE OF ARTAXERXES

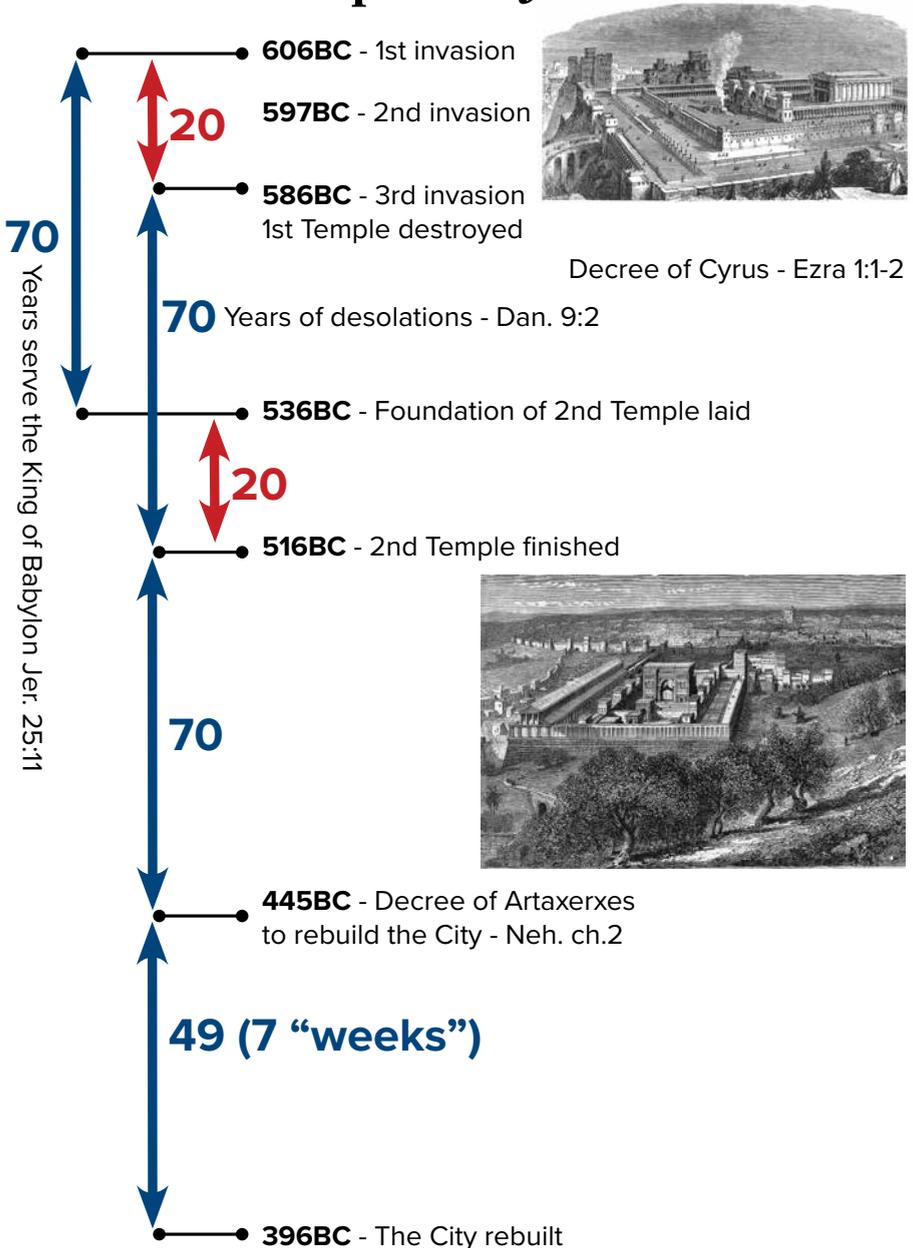
445BC START DATE FOR THE 70 WEEKS

The **start date** for the 490-year period determined on **Jerusalem** is precisely given as *"the going forth of the commandment to restore and build **Jerusalem**"* (Dan. 9:25).

Just as the decree of Cyrus focused on the **rebuilding of the Temple**, the start of the "70 weeks" focuses on a decree to **rebuild Jerusalem**.

This event is recorded in Nehemiah 2:1-11 and occurred in the month Nisan, of the 20th year of Artaxerxes the Persian king, which we know was 445 BC; he began to reign in 465BC.

The Destruction and Reconstruction of the Temple and Jerusalem



Nehemiah was King Artaxerxes' cupbearer, and was sad in the King's presence. When asked to explain his sadness, he replied,

*"Why should not my countenance be sad, when **the CITY**, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?"*
(Neh. 2:1-3).

Artaxerxes immediately gave letters to Nehemiah authorising him to rebuild the CITY of Jerusalem (Neh. 2:8). This decree fixes the **start date** for Israel's 490 prophetic years which conclude with the blessing of Israel at the second coming of Christ! It began in the month Nisan (first month of the Jewish religious year), in the 20th year of Artaxerxes, which was 445BC.

Some have confused the decree of Cyrus with the decree of Artaxerxes, however, it is clear that the city of Jerusalem was not rebuilt in the days of Zerubbabel under the decree of Cyrus. After Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem more than 90 years later, we are told that he inspected the ruins of the city which had not been cleared, so that he said, "...*there was no place for the beast that was under me to pass*" (Neh. 2:14).

Only the Temple had been built, and after a concentrated effort of 52 days the wall was joined to provide some protection from their enemies while the city was built. Nehemiah wrote:

*"The city was large and great: but the people were few therein, and the **houses were not builded**"* (Neh 7:4).

THREE DIVISIONS IN THE SEVENTY WEEKS

The 70 x 7 years are divided into 3 periods in the following order

- 1) 7 x 7 = 49 years
- 2) 62 x 7 = 434 years
- 3) 1 x 7 = 7 years

Total 490 Years

During the first 49 years the city would be rebuilt "*in troublous times*", and this happened, as the Samaritans opposed the reconstruction of Jerusalem. Then would follow 434 years which would conclude with the presentation to the nation of "*Messiah the Prince*" as Israel's **King**.

Following the 69th "week" Messiah would be "*cut off*", but not for any wrong that He had done. Then the city of Jerusalem and the Temple would be destroyed **before** the last seven years, the 70th "week" began. The last 7 years would begin when a **Roman prince** confirmed a covenant with the Jews for 7 years.

The summation of the **first two** periods is 49 + 434 or 483 prophetic years, which Sir Robert Anderson QC, in his book, *The Coming Prince*, has shown was fulfilled on the **very day** Jesus Christ presented Himself to the nation of Israel on Palm Sunday AD32 as Messiah and King.

At no time prior to Palm Sunday did Jesus present Himself to the nation **as King**. It was then that He rode into Jerusalem on a colt, the foal of an ass, and the crowds cried, "*Blessed be **the King** that cometh in the name of the Lord*" (Luke 19:38), in fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy.

"Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass" (Zech. 9:9).

The multitude identified Jesus as the **son of David**, thus making Him eligible to sit upon David's throne. They cried:

"Hosanna to the son of David: BLESSED IS HE THAT COMETH IN THE NAME OF THE LORD" (Matt 21:9,15; Luke 19:38).

Calculating the prophetic years of 360 days and converting back to the Gregorian calendar, Sir Robert Anderson QC has shown that this remarkable prophecy was fulfilled to the very day, 173,880 days from **the 10th of Nisan 445BC to the 6th April AD32**. (Prophecy always uses 360-day years - Gen. 7:11; 8:3-4).

As Jesus rode into Jerusalem on that day, He said to Jerusalem:

*"If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in **THIS THY DAY**, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.*

*For the days shall come upon thee, that **thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round**...and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation" (Luke 19:42-44).*

The consequence for Israel of failing to understand the prophecy of Daniel chapter 9, was that Jerusalem would be destroyed and the Jews scattered among the nations. Jesus said:

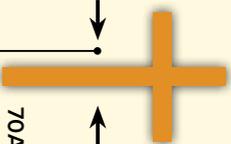
*"When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh... And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and **Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled**" (Luke 21:20-24).*

Daniel, also, indicated that **after** Messiah was "*cut off*" Jerusalem would be destroyed, as it was in AD70!

The 70 "Weeks" Prophecy – Daniel 9:24-27

SEVEN EVENTS FORETOLD AFTER THE END OF THE 69TH WEEK

1. Messiah cut off 32AD
2. The city and sanctuary destroyed 70AD
3. A future Roman prince confirms a 7 year treaty
4. Temple built and sacrifices begin
5. Sacrifices cease and idol set up
6. Desolations until the end of week
7. The desolator destroyed



"Blindness in part is happened to Israel, UNTIL the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved" Rom. 11:25-26

70AD

City rebuilt

To Messiah the Prince

Temple burned - Israel blinded

The "mystery" Church age
Eph. 3:1-10; Acts 28:25-28

Israel scattered
Luke 21:20-24

Temple built

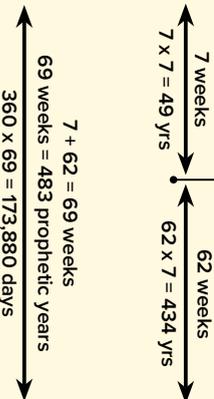
Temple defiled

1260 days

1260 days

"beginning of sorrows"
"great tribulation"

1 week = 7 years



7 + 62 = 69 weeks
69 weeks = 483 prophetic years
360 x 69 = 173,880 days

PALM SUNDAY

"Behold your King..." Zech. 9:9; Luke 19:42-44

SIX BLESSINGS ON JEWS AND JERUSALEM AT THE END OF 70 WEEKS

1. Finish the transgression
2. Make an end of sins
3. Make reconciliation for iniquity
4. Bring in everlasting righteousness
5. Seal up the vision and prophecy
6. Anoint the most holy (place)

“And the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined” (Dan. 9:26).

Josephus, the Jewish historian, witnessed the siege of Jerusalem and recorded the details in his book *The Jewish Wars*. The story of the five-month siege makes grim reading indeed, for while Titus the Roman General was attacking the city there were three factions within the city engaged in a ruthless civil war. On some days the Romans crucified 500 Jews in view of the city, and within the city starvation drove women to eat their own children.

The destruction of Jerusalem and the scattering of the nation by the Romans was also foretold in the **Palestinian Covenant**. Indeed two captivities are described, firstly to Babylon (Deut. 28:36), and then, at the hands of the Romans who scattered them (Deut. 28: 64)

“among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other”.

“The LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young” (Deut. 28:49-50).

Josephus records that large numbers of the Jewish prisoners were sent to Egypt to work as slaves in mines; so many that the price of slaves dropped. Moses warned:

“And the LORD shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I spake unto thee, Thou shalt see it no more again: and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you” (Deut. 28:68).

DANIEL'S SEVENTIETH WEEK (LAST SEVEN YEARS)

Since the prophecy in question has been so accurately fulfilled up to the end of the 69th week, the question arises, When will the **last seven years** of Jerusalem's history run its course?

It is obvious that the 70th week has not yet been completed, for if it had, Jerusalem would now be enjoying everlasting righteousness, the most holy place in the rebuilt Temple would have been anointed for service, and the nation of Israel would have been reconciled to God.

The 70th week obviously did not commence immediately after the 69th week, when Christ presented Himself as King to the nation. In fact the prophecy

itself indicates that the 70th week (7 years) would **NOT** occur immediately after Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, because two **other events** had to follow. They were -

- 1) Messiah would be cut off (four days later) AND
- 2) Jerusalem and the Temple (*"the city and the sanctuary"*) would be destroyed! (thirty eight years later).

One could hardly say that the six blessings which will mark the conclusion of the 70 weeks (490 years) had become a reality when the nation actually slew its Messiah, and then was scattered by the Romans throughout the Roman Empire! Scripture foretold that such a dispersion would be the result of the nation's **disobedience** (Deut. 28:36-37, 63-67).

Josephus' account of the siege of Jerusalem and other events in his time indicated that Jerusalem was anything but righteous or reconciled, and the Temple was not the place of godly worship. The behaviour of the Jewish combatants was so vile that even the Romans were shocked.

A GAP BETWEEN THE 69TH AND 70TH WEEKS

In view of these facts we conclude that there is a gap in time, a parenthesis, between the 69th and 70th weeks. Someone may ask, How long is the gap? and, Why should there be a gap when there was no interruption to the first 483 years? The concept of a gap in the 70 "weeks" prophecy is not an isolated occurrence, for other Scriptures indicate gaps in Israel's history.

JAMES' GAP

James, in his address to the other apostles and the elders at Jerusalem, stated: *"God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name...as it is written, **After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up**"* (Acts 15:14 -16).

First a Gentile Church would be gathered in, and **AFTER THIS** the Lord will return AND **REBUILD THE THRONE OF DAVID!** So the final re-establishment of the throne of David awaits the gathering in of the *"fulness of the Gentiles"*. Not only does James indicate a gap between the 69th and 70th weeks, but he tells us what the gap was for: *"to visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name."* Obviously this is the Church Age, and the people called out are those that make up the Gentile bride of Christ.

EZEKIEL'S GAP

Ezekiel prophesied that King Zedekiah would be **the last king** to wear a crown on the throne of David - "*UNTIL he come whose right it is*" (Ezek. 21:25-27). In other words, from 586BC till the second coming of Christ there would be a long period when the throne of David would be unoccupied. The final blessing of Israel therefore awaits the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to sit on the throne of David as the angel Gabriel foretold:

"He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end"
(Luke 1:32-33).

HOSEA'S GAP

Hosea also spoke of a gap in Israel's history, after which the nation would turn to the Lord. He wrote,

"For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without terephim: Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days" (Hos. 3:4-5).

Hosea prophesied to the **northern kingdom** known as Ephraim or Israel, which was carried away captive by the Assyrians in 721BC. Israel, as well as Judah, will be restored to the land and to the Lord after a long period of "*many days*" without a king or sacrifices. That restoration will come in **the latter days!**

Ezekiel's prophecy of the **two sticks** looks forward to a time when God will make them "*one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all*" (Ezek. 37:22); while Zechariah plainly states:

"And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them; for I have mercy upon them: and they shall be as though I had not cast them off." (Zech. 10:6).

Hosea makes it clear that the restoration of the northern kingdom and its reunion with Judah will only occur after a **long gap** in time. This gap will conclude at the beginning of the 70th week of Daniel's prophecy.

PAUL'S GAP

Paul, in Chapter 11 of the Epistle to the Romans, also tells how Israel, the "*natural olive branch*," had been broken off (Rom. 11:17), and the Gentiles,

"*the wild olive branch*," had been grafted into their place. He goes on to say that the blindness of Israel would continue "**UNTIL** *the fulness of the Gentiles be come in*" (Rom. 11:25).

This gap in Israel's prophetic history will continue **UNTIL** the Church is complete, and then, Paul says,

"And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins" (Rom. 11:25-27).

Paul's words sound very much like the blessings which will fall on Israel at the conclusion of the 70th week! What a difference! In Paul's day, AD60, he writes: "*As concerning the gospel, they are **enemies** for your sakes*" (Rom. 11:28). He tells the Corinthians:

*"Their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ... Nevertheless **when it** (Israel) **shall turn to the Lord**, the veil shall be taken away* (2 Cor. 3:14-16).

The change for Israel can only take place after the **FULNESS OF THE GENTILES HAS COME IN!** And that blessed event is known as the **RAPTURE** of the Church!

The last 7 years of Israel's history must therefore be **preceded by the removal of the Church**, and be **followed** by the second coming of Christ as King of kings. At the beginning of that last 7-year period there will be 144,000 Jews converted; these will preach the Gospel of the coming kingdom of Jesus Christ world-wide and multitudes will be saved (Matt. 24:14). The nation of Israel as a whole, however, will need the Great Tribulation judgments to bring it to repentance (Rev. 7:1-17; Rom. 11:26; Ezek. 39:22).

The gap between the 69th and 70th weeks has continued for nearly 2,000 years, while Israel has been dispersed among the nations, persecuted, and slaughtered. **Unbelieving Israel** is now **partially** back in the land in fulfilment of Ezekiel's prophecy (Ezek. 36), but once the Church is raptured, the 70th week will run its course.

THE CHURCH AGE A MYSTERY

We might ask the question, Why wasn't the Church Age mentioned in Dan 9? The answer is given in Ephesians chapter 3, where we read that God ceased to deal with Israel in the same manner as He did in the Old Testament, and had begun to deal with **a new body**, the Church, made up

of Jews and Gentiles who became “*fellowheirs and of the same body.*” This new body was **not revealed** in the Old Testament. It was a “*mystery.*” Paul says it was

*“not made known unto the sons of men, as it is **now revealed** unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel”* (Eph. 3:5-6).

On the day of Pentecost the Apostles spoke in **Gentile languages** “*the wonderful works of God*” (Acts 2:11). Isaiah had prophesied that there would be a period when God would speak to Israel “*with stammering lips and **another tongue...yet they would not hear***” (Isa. 28:11-12), and Paul quotes Isaiah’s prophecy in 1 Cor. 14:21, saying in verse 22 that the Gentile languages would be “*a sign*” to unbelieving Israel.

By speaking in **Gentile languages** the Apostles were indicating that God was about to act in judgment on Israel and turn to the Gentiles. Yet Peter reminded the Jews that if they repented God would

*“send Jesus Christ...whom the heaven must receive **until the times of restitution of all things**, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began”* (Acts 3:19-21).

The casting away of Israel is only **until** the nation repents, and then God will send Jesus Christ with times of refreshing for the nation. The duration of the Church-age gap is linked to the period of Israel’s unbelief.

The Church – “*which in other ages was not made known*” – (Eph. 3:5)



THE FUTURE ROMAN PRINCE AND THE LAST 7 YEARS

At the beginning of the 70th week of Israel's prophetic history there will arise a Roman prince who will confirm a treaty, or covenant, with Israel for 7 years. We know he is a **future Roman** prince because Scripture states it was **his people who would destroy the city and the sanctuary** in AD70. There is no doubt that this was the Romans.

*"And the **people of the prince that shall come** (future tense) shall destroy the city and the sanctuary" (Dan. 9:26).*

Therefore during the last 7 years of Israel's prophetic history this **future Roman prince** will confirm the covenant for one week (7 years), but in the middle of the 7 years (after 3 1/2 years) he will turn against Israel and *"cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate"* (Dan. 9:27).

This period is also described as *"1260 days," "42 months,"* and *"a time and times and the dividing of time"*, in the following places: Rev. 11:2-4; 12:6,14; 13:5; Dan. 7:25.

The Roman prince is without doubt the coming Antichrist who will arise out of the revived Roman Empire. He will stop the Jewish sacrifices in the **rebuilt Temple** at Jerusalem for *"the overspreading of abominations"* (Dan. 9:27).

Some interpret the *"prince that shall come"* as a further mention of Messiah the Prince, saying that the reference to causing *"the sacrifice and the oblation to cease"* speaks of Christ's sacrifice at Calvary, which fulfilled the Old Testament types and replaced animal sacrifices.

However Dan. 9:27 gives **the reason** for causing the sacrifice to cease; it is *"FOR THE OVERSPREADING OF ABOMINATIONS,"* which of course refers to the **abomination of idolatry**. This future prince therefore cannot be Messiah, but must be Antichrist who will replace the **Jewish sacrifices** during the 70th week with his own idol image. It would be blasphemous to suggest that Christ's sacrifice at Calvary had as its purpose *"the overspreading of abominations!"*

Paul tells us about this terrible event in 2 Thess. 2:3-4, when the *"man of sin...the son of perdition" would exalt himself "above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."*

Zechariah speaks of two shepherds in Israel. The Divine shepherd would be rejected by the nation and sold for 30 pieces of silver (Zech. 11:10-13), but

the foolish (impious) shepherd, the “*idol shepherd*,” would turn on the nation and tear it as a wild beast would tear the flock. This foolish idol shepherd is the one to whom Jesus referred:

*“I am come in my Father’s name, and you receive me not: if **another shall come in his own name**, him you will receive”* (John 5:43).

The idolatrous character of Antichrist’s reign is described vividly in Rev. 13:14-15 and Dan. 11:35-39. Daniel says,

*“...he shall exalt himself... above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods...Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers...nor regard any god: for he **shall magnify himself above all**.*

*But in his estate shall he honour **the God of forces**: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things.*

*Thus shall he do...**with a strange god**, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall **divide the land for gain**.”*

That will be the “*overspreading of abominations*” which will desolate the renewed Temple worship. The word “*overspreading*” carries the thought of “wings” and some have translated it thus. Perhaps it may indicate the nature of Antichrist’s image, like the Roman eagle which emblem was on each Roman legion.

In this regard Antichrist will fulfill the “type” of Antiochus Epiphanes, who erected his **idol image** on the altar of God in the Temple and placed other idols in every village in Israel. In 167BC the Seleucid King Antiochus Epiphanes consecrated the Temple of the Lord to the Greek god Jupiter Olympus (1st Book of Maccabees 1:47-56 ; 2nd Book of Maccabees 6:1; Dan. 8:11-14).

At the conclusion of the 70th week Christ will return and the Antichrist will be taken with his false prophet, and both will

“be cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone” (Rev. 19:20).

Daniel states that the Roman prince that shall come will reign until the end of the 70th week, but “*that determined*”, God’s wrath, “*shall be poured upon the desolate*” (desolator). The word translated “*desolate*” may also be translated “*desolator*”. The Roman “*prince that shall come*” will be the desolator who will set up his idol in the Temple, and this blasphemous act will result in wrath being poured out upon him.

**IMPLICATIONS OF THE
PROPHECY -
A REBUILT TEMPLE!**

Today we are fast approaching the end of the Church Age. The Rapture could take place at any moment, and Israel's last 7 years will begin. Already Israel is aligning herself with the revived Roman Empire (EU) and is an Associate Member of the EU. She is also a member of the European region of UN. The Temple will be built early in the 7 years as Israel turns back to the Lord, and sacrifices will again be offered.



There are yet **two Temples** to be built at Jerusalem. They are -

- 1) The **Tribulation Temple** described in Rev. 11:1-4, and
- 2) The **Millennial Temple** described in Ezek. 40 to 46.

The Tribulation Temple will be constructed with the approval of the Roman Antichrist and the encouragement of two prophets who are likened to Haggai and Zechariah. These were the two Old Testament prophets who urged Zerubbabel the governor, and Joshua the high priest, to rebuild the Temple after the Babylonian captivity, under a decree issued by a pagan Persian emperor (Zech. 4: 1-14).

In the same manner the two Tribulation prophets will urge the reconstruction of the Temple in the first half of the Tribulation. Notice that they are described as *"the two olive trees"* supplying the oil to keep the seven lamps of testimony burning (Rev. 11:4 ; Zech. 4:3).

It is interesting that Zechariah was murdered *"between the porch and the altar"* of the rebuilt Temple (Matt 23:35), and the two Tribulation prophets will be slain by Antichrist in Jerusalem (Rev. 11:7-12)! History will repeat itself.

The Jews' Tribulation Temple will not occupy all of the Temple Mount for John is told **not to measure** the courtyard surrounding the Temple, *"for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot 42 months"* (Rev. 11:2).

According to Luke 21:24, “*Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.*”

After an initial period of peace under the protection of Antichrist there will be a sudden change, and Israel will suffer as never before. This last 3½ years before Christ returns will be the most intense part of the Great Tribulation. Matthew records,

“Immediately after the tribulation of those days...shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven” (Matt. 24:29-30).

The nations that survive the Tribulation will be judged by Christ (Matt. 25:31-46), and all Israel will be finally brought back to the land following the scattering which will occur during the Tribulation. They will come by plane and ship (Matt. 24:31; Isa. 60:8-9).

The nations that followed Antichrist will be cast into “*everlasting fire*” (Matt. 25:41), but those who believed and stood with God’s people Israel during the Tribulation will enter the millennial kingdom of Christ (Matt. 25:34-40; Zech. 14:16; Isa. 60:3,10-16).

In that day, Israel will sing the song recorded in Isa 26, and will be a righteous nation; “*the Priests of the LORD*” (Isa. 61:6).

The Tribulation Temple will be removed, possibly by a great earthquake (Rev. 16:18; Zech. 14:4-11), and a new glorious Temple will be constructed and operate according to the specifications laid down in Ezekiel chapters 40 to 46.

Finally, the Glory of God will return and will shine forth continuously from Jerusalem, which will have its name changed to “*Jehovah Shammah*,” meaning “*THE LORD IS THERE!*” (Ezek. 48:35).

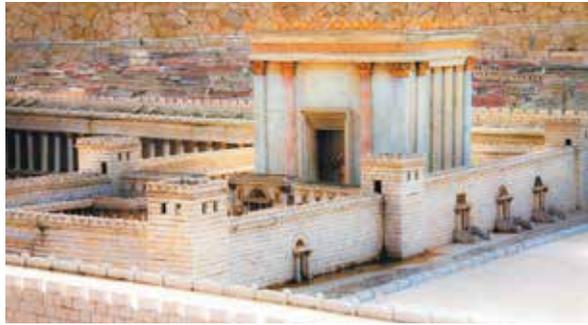
SEVEN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ANTICHRIST

There are seven things we need to note about the latter-days Roman prince, the Antichrist.

- i)** He will arise peaceably and confirm a 7-year treaty with Israel (Dan. 9:27).
- ii)** He will broker a deal in which Israel will be able to rebuild the Temple while allowing the Gentiles to occupy the courtyard of the Temple Mount, ie. the Dome of the Rock (Rev. 11:2).
- iii)** He will “*divide the land* (of Israel) *for gain*” (Dan. 11:39; Joel3:2), ie the Arab/Israeli division of the land will be settled.

- iv) After 3½ years he will kill the two prophets of God in Jerusalem, but God will raise them from the dead and catch them away in the sight of all men (Rev. 11:7-12).
- v) He will stop the Temple sacrifices by the then-converted nation of Israel halfway through the 7-year Tribulation, and will persecute Israel (Dan. 9:27). (Israel's conversion will be earlier in the first half of the Tribulation at the time of the Russian/Islamic invasion described in Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39. Note especially Ezek. 39:22.
- vi) He will sit in the Temple claiming to be God! (2 Thess. 2:3-4).
- vii) He will set up his idol image in the Temple and throughout the world, demanding universal worship! (Rev. 13:12).

This future **Roman prince will be demon possessed from the bottomless pit at the mid-point of the Tribulation and continue 42 months** until the Lord Jesus Christ returns with the armies of heaven and casts both the beast and his false prophet into the lake of fire (Rev. 19:11-21).



HOW CLOSE ARE WE TO THE 70TH WEEK OF ISRAEL'S HISTORY?

There are many aspects of this prophecy which indicate that we are drawing near to the time when Israel will begin its last seven years before Jesus Christ comes to reign.

Israel has been recognised as a sovereign state since May 1948, and its **Jewish population** in the land has grown from 565,000 in 1945 to 5,600,000 in 2016. Jews make up 75% of the total population.

The Temple Mount is occupied by a Muslim mosque, but many Jews are looking for Messiah to return to rebuild the Temple. Some want to build the Temple **before** Messiah appears. Priestly garments and instruments for use in Temple service have already been made by the *Temple Institute* in Jerusalem. In 2004 a Jewish Sanhedrin of 71 members was ordained and in 2016 Jews kept Passover with a Pascal lamb on Mount Scopus overlooking the Temple Mount.

In April 1997 an advertisement in the Jerusalem Post announced that the “**Restore the Half-Shekel Fund**” had been established in accordance with Moses’ instruction in Exod. 30:11-16, and as practiced in 2 Chron. 24:1-14. The Chief Rabbinate of Jerusalem has been selling specially minted coins, and each year these have been returned to Jerusalem, consecrated as Hekdesh (Temple Treasure), and stored in a vault under the Bank of Israel **until Messiah comes!** The silver holy half-shekel was for the maintenance of the Tabernacle and Temple buildings, and will provide funds for construction and maintenance of the Temple.

The first holy half-shekel was issued on the 50th anniversary of the nation, and the illustration is to commemorate the 51st year of Israel’s re-establishment.

Identification of the priestly family (the sons of Aaron) is proceeding and training for Temple service is under way at Jerusalem.



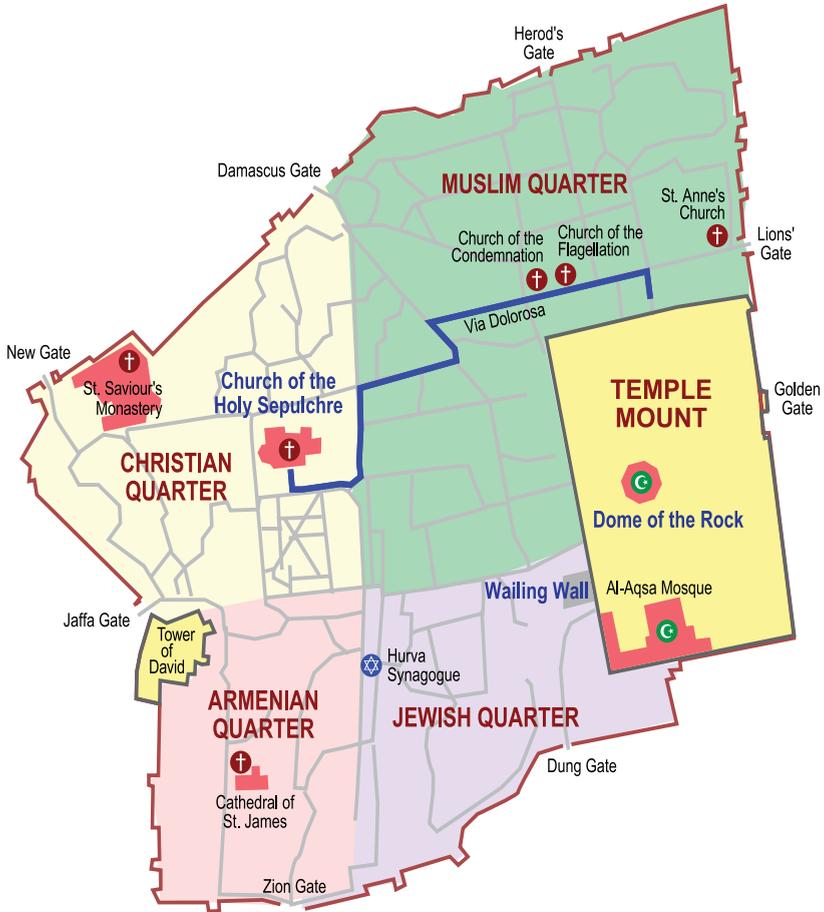
There is little doubt that the foundations of the Second Temple have been located by Professor Kaufman about 100 metres north of the Dome of the Rock in the northern courtyard of the Temple Mount.

Asher Kaufman, a Scottish Jew, migrated to Israel in 1960. In Israel he became a professor at the Hebrew University, researching fusion and the spectroscopy of ionised gases. He was a man given to detail and precision.

Kaufman studied early Jewish writings to verify the measurements of the Temple, and found that it had been sited in an east/west orientation with the entrance facing the eastern gate of the wall surrounding the court of the Temple. If the eastern gate could be located, then it was only a matter of drawing a line due west to fix the position of the Temple. In addition, he found that the red heifer had been sacrificed on the Mount of Olives at an elevated location where the Temple could be sighted above the walls of Jerusalem, and by standing on this high point it was only a matter of looking beyond the eastern gate (or Golden Gate) to fix the position of the Temple.

Underground drains used to carry blood to the Kidron Valley from beside the altar which stood in front of the Temple had already been located by a

Jerusalem and the Temple Mount



British surveyor, Captain Warren, in the 19th century, and his findings had been reported in the *Biblical Archaeological Review*.

Gershon Gorenberg, senior reporter with *Jerusalem Report*, wrote:

“He (Kaufman) studied the charts, drawn by the nineteenth-century explorers of the ancient cisterns on the north side of the Mount; they line up just outside where he says the walls were.”

By 28 December 1974 Kaufman had enough evidence to assert that he had found the site of the Second Temple, **one hundred metres north of the Dome of the Rock!** The Third Temple can be built without demolishing the Dome of the Rock.

The revival of the Roman Empire under the banner of the European Union (EU) and Israel's Associate Membership with the EU, prepare the way for Antichrist's involvement in Israel's affairs.

The "Oslo Accord" and subsequent peace plans which seek to solve the Arab/Jewish conflict by dividing the land and making Jerusalem an international city, lay the groundwork for negotiations for the Temple Mount.

The rise of Islamic fundamentalism, which began in 1979 when the Shah of Persia was overthrown, is most significant. It is clear from Scripture that God will use the hatred of the Muslims to cause the nation of Israel to seek the Lord. Israel has defeated her Arab neighbours so decisively on the battlefield that she now feels secure, especially with military support from the United States.

In 2016 the US Congress voted \$50 billion of military aid to Israel over the following 10 years and in December 2016 Israel received the first of fifty US F-35 stealth fighter planes which it is claimed are invisible to enemy radar.

However, the wider circle of Islamic nations: Iran (Persia), Turkey (Togarmah), Libya, and Ethiopia (Sudan), represent a more formidable threat, and when Turkey falls to the Islamists Israel will have no adequate military answer. **Russia's relationship with Islamic nations is an ominous sign.**

The Rapture of the Church takes place **before the 70th "week"** begins when the Temple will be reconstructed, so although we must refrain from fixing any time for the Second Advent, it is evident that we are drawing near to the end of the Church age.

THE DAY OF THE LORD

Throughout Scripture, the Day of the Lord is seen as the time of awful judgment which precedes the second coming of Christ. Events which are foretold in the Day of the Lord are the same as those which will occur in the period which Jesus called the "*great tribulation*", and we may safely say that they both refer to the same period.

After describing the Rapture in 1 Thess. 4:13-18 Paul wrote:

"...the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night...when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

*But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief... For God hath **not appointed us to wrath** (of the day of the Lord), but*

to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ ...that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him" (1 Thess. 5:2-10).

These verses leave us in absolutely no doubt that the Rapture will occur BEFORE the Day of the Lord, the 70th week of Daniel's prophecy. **The 70th week relates to Israel's prophetic history and cannot apply to the Church.** It is the "*time of Jacob's* (Israel's) **trouble**" (Jer. 30:7), and the Church must be removed **before** that day comes. As Noah and Lot were removed to safety before judgment fell, so the Church will be removed **before** the Day of the Lord (Luke 17:26-37).

SUMMARY

The seventy "weeks" were 70 x 7, or 490 years, until **Israel and Jerusalem** would be brought into **everlasting righteousness**.

The prophetic time **begins** on the tenth day of the month Nisan in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, which was 445BC. It is divided into three periods. During the first 49 years the city was rebuilt.

At the end of the 69th week (7+62 = 69 weeks or 483 years) **Messiah** presented Himself as King to Israel. Christ did this on the first Palm Sunday.

Then four days later **Messiah was "cut off"** on the cross, and finally Jerusalem was destroyed as predicted 38 years later in AD70 . These events had to occur **between the 69th and 70th "weeks"** of the prophecy. The 70th week does not therefore immediately follow the 69th week. There is an obvious **time gap** between the 69th and 70th "week", known as the mystery Church Age, not made known in ages past (Eph. 3:1-9).

When the Church is raptured, the Church Age will finish and Israel's 70th week will begin with a 7-year **peace treaty** confirmed by a **Roman prince (EU)**. This Roman prince will facilitate the final agreement to **divide the land** of Israel (Dan. 11:39) and permit joint occupation of the Temple Mount by Jews and Gentiles (Rev. 11:1-2). The Tribulation Temple will be built. At first Antichrist, the Roman prince, will appear friendly to Israel and will defend her against an Egyptian (Arab) invasion (Dan. 11:40-45), at the same time subduing the Middle East, which provides the pretext for occupation of the "*glorious land*".

Early in the Tribulation 144,000 Jews will be saved, then sealed for protection with the Father's name in their forehead. Their task will be to proclaim the **Gospel of the kingdom**, which must be preached in "*all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come*" (Matt. 24:14).

These ultimately suffer martyrdom and are seen **in heaven halfway** through the Tribulation (Rev. 14:1-3). The conversion of the 144,000 may be triggered by the Rapture.

During the first 3½ years, **all Israel** will be brought to repentance at the time of the Russian/Islamic invasion through the global preaching of the 144,000 Jewish “*servants of God*”, as described in Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39 and Joel chapter 2. The two Jewish prophets described in Revelation chapter 11 may be two of the 144,000; these also are slain after they “*have finished their testimony*” which lasts for 1,260 days (Rev. 11:3,7).

At the end of the first 3½ years the peace treaty will be broken and Antichrist will reveal his true character. He will then try to wipe out Israel but one third of the people will be preserved to the coming of the Lord, at which time Antichrist and his false prophet will be cast alive into the lake of fire (Rev. 19:20; Dan. 7:11). Israel will be protected by God in a wilderness by a great eagle; **possibly America** since nations are symbolised as “*a great eagle with great wings*” (Ezek. 17:1-17). Israel will be protected during the second half of the Tribulation in a location that God has prepared (Rev. 12:6,14), and will welcome Christ when He returns to reign as King of kings (Isa. 25:9).

Divine testimony during the second half of the Tribulation will be administered by an angel who will proclaim the “*everlasting Gospel*” (Rev. 14:6). The “*everlasting Gospel*” warns the world:

“Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come : and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters”(Rev. 14:7).

The first half of the Tribulation sees the Russian/Islamic armies invade Israel and Israel turn to the Lord, while in **the second half** of the 7-year Tribulation the judgment of the Gentiles concludes with the battle of Armageddon when Antichrist gathers “*all nations*” against Jerusalem.

Christ’s kingdom will finally be established on earth, and only then will the six blessings determined upon Israel and Jerusalem become a reality; the **490 prophetic years will have run their course**.

Section 3

The Times of the Gentiles

Jesus said:
“Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles,
UNTIL the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled”
(Luke 21:24).



Babylon Empire
606BC to 536BC



Persian Empire
536BC to 332BC



Grecian Empire
332BC to 63BC



Roman Empire
63BC until Christ
returns

The Times of the Gentiles

(Daniel 2 & 7)

The *Times of the Gentiles* is defined as the time of Gentiles occupation of Jerusalem beginning with the Babylonians in 586BC and ending with the final Roman ruler; Antichrist. Daniel first outlined this period in chapter 2 of his prophecy when he recorded a vision given to a pagan king, Nebuchadnezzar. The second outline of this period of history is seen in a vision given to Daniel in chapter 7 of his prophecy. Jesus said of the Jews:

*“They shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, **until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled**”* (Luke 21:24).

Nebuchadnezzar, as a pagan king saw the mighty empires of history, with their ruthless military conquests, amazing civil administrations, grand building programs, idolatrous religions and humanistic cultures, as something to be admired. He saw the procession of empires through history as a glorious image made from the precious metals of the earth, whereas Daniel saw them as four wild beasts.

The dreams taught that **four kingdoms** would dominate the world scene before God would set up His everlasting kingdom over the whole earth. Prior to Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom there had been the **Assyrian and the Egyptian Empires**. These contended for supremacy but Daniel addressed Nebuchadnezzar as **the first world monarch**, and said,

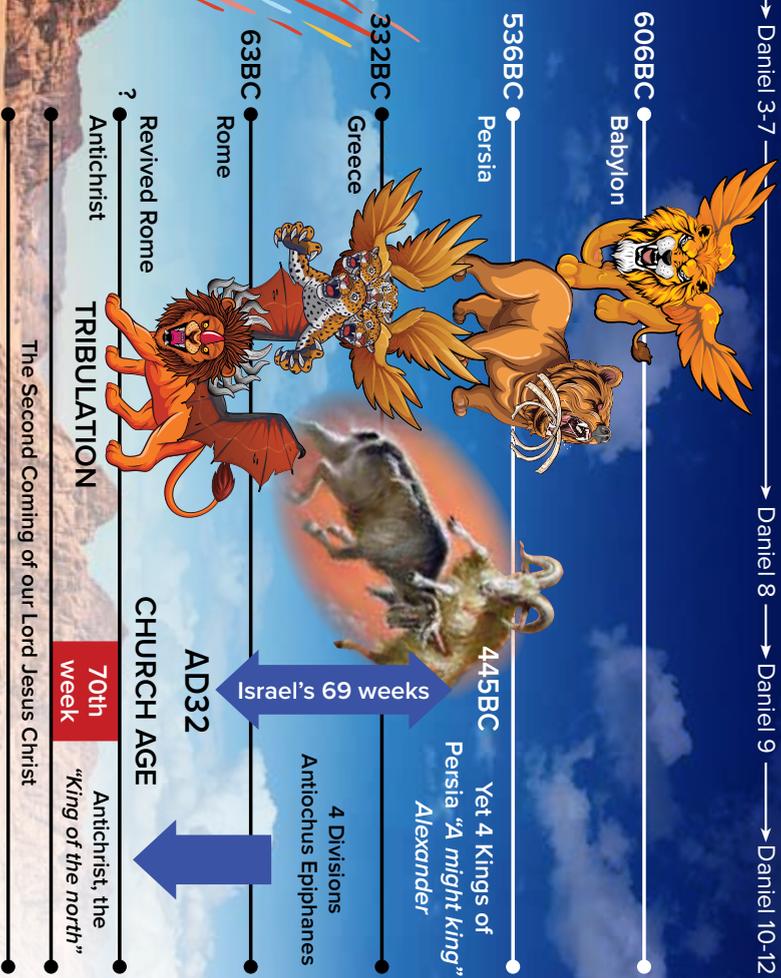
*“Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee **ruler over them all**”* (Dan 2:37-38).

Nebuchadnezzar’s image symbolised not only the Babylonian Empire, but all of the Gentile powers that would dominate the world scene till the time when *“one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven... His dominion is an everlasting dominion”* (Dan 7:13-14). Details of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream are shown on page 59.

Nebuchadnezzar’s reign began with the death of his father, Nabopolassar, in the third year of Jehoiakim king of Judah (606 BC). The Second Book of Kings, chapters 24 and 25, tell the sad story of Israel’s last nineteen years of rebellion against the Lord and against the king of Babylon until

The Book of Daniel

Daniel 1 & 2 → Daniel 3-7 → Daniel 8 → Daniel 9 → Daniel 10-12



Nebuchadnezzar's armies came for the third time and sacked Jerusalem, burning the Temple and breaking down the walls of the city. This final invasion was in 586 BC.

Nebuchadnezzar's first invasion was in Jehoiakim's third year. Jehoiakim was allowed to continue as king in Jerusalem, but later revolted. Nebuchadnezzar came a second time and Jehoiakim died during the siege; his young son Jehoiachin was made king. Jehoiachin chose to surrender, and was taken prisoner to Babylon where he spent the next 37 years in prison. After 37 years he was released and exalted above all the other captive kings (2 Kings 25:27).

Jehoiachin's descendants can be traced down to Jesus Christ, as indicated in the genealogy recorded in Matthew chapter 1. Thus the throne of David never lacked for someone to sit upon the throne of David in fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy (Jer. 33:17).

The last king of Judah was Zedekiah, who was Jehoiachin's uncle; he served the king of Babylon but later revolted and was captured as he fled during the third invasion. Zedekiah saw all of his sons slain, and then his eyes were put out and he was taken in chains to a Babylonian prison where he died (Jer. 52:10, 11; Ezek. 12 :12, 13).

Ezekiel described Zedekiah as a *"profane and wicked prince."*

*"Thus saith the Lord God; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown... I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it (the throne) shall be no more, **UNTIL he come (Jesus Christ) whose right it is; and I will give it him"***
(Ezek 21:25-27).

Hosea also prophesied that Israel (the northern kingdom) would be without a king, lose its sovereignty, and come under Gentile control **until the last days**:

*"For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice... **Afterward** shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness **in the latter days**"* (Hos. 3:4-5).

THE INTERPRETATION OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM - CH. 2

The interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream is given in Dan. 2:36-49. The four parts of the image represent **four kingdoms** that would dominate the world scene from Daniel's day right down to the last days, when God would

set up a kingdom that would never be replaced. We read:

*“In the days of these kings shall the **God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed:** and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and **it shall stand for ever**” (Dan. 2:44).*

THE FIRST KINGDOM-A HEAD OF GOLD

The first of these kingdoms was the Babylonian Empire, which extended from Babylon to Assyria in the north, and all of Israel and the land of Egypt in the south. At that time Nebuchadnezzar was the king of Babylon, and we read concerning him, *“Thou art this head of gold!”* (Dan. 2:38).

The duration of the Babylonian Empire was to be quite short, for Jeremiah had prophesied that it would last for only 70 years. He wrote,



*“And it shall come to pass, when **seventy years** are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD”* (Jer. 25:12).

Babylon was overthrown by Darius the Mede (Dan 5:30-31) under the Persian King Cyrus in 538BC. Jerusalem was first captured in 606BC and Cyrus made a decree that Jews could return in 536BC; 70 years later.

THE SECOND KINGDOM-SHOULDERS OF SILVER

A second kingdom was to replace the Babylonian Empire and this was represented by the shoulders of silver. We read:

*“And after thee shall arise **another kingdom** inferior to thee”* (Dan. 2:39).

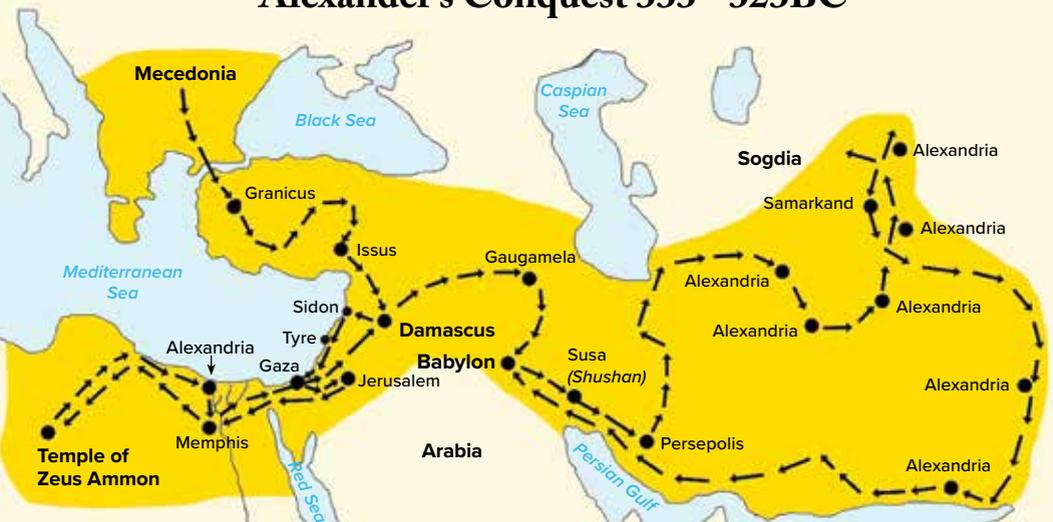
This second kingdom undoubtedly was the Medo-Persian Empire. The two arms indicated the dual nature of the kingdom, but as time went by it became known as the Persian Empire. It continued from 538BC to 332BC when it was overthrown by Alexander the Great; a period of 206 years.

The Persian Empire had 127 provinces and reached the border of India in the east; Greece in the west; the Caucasus in the north and Egypt in the south.

THE THIRD KINGDOM-BELLY AND THIGHS OF BRASS

The third kingdom, represented by the belly and thighs of brass, was to cover an even greater territory for we read of *“another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over **all the earth**”* (Dan. 2:39).

Alexander's Conquest 333 - 323BC



It was Alexander the Great who led inferior numbers of Grecian forces against the massive Persian armies. He was incensed at the way Xerxes, king of Persia (486-465BC) had humiliated the Greeks, and although he had only a comparatively small army and virtually no navy, he fought three battles to break the power of Persia at Granicus 334BC, Issus 333BC and Gaugamela 331BC.

Alexander captured Tyre (332BC) in fulfilment of the prophecy of Ezekiel (Ezek. 27), and all the land of Egypt. By capturing all the eastern seaboard of the Mediterranean he neutralised the Persian navy which then had no land bases. Alexander spared Jerusalem on the way to Egypt and gave the Jews special privileges. He by-passed Jerusalem on his return from Egypt and then led his army through Central Asia to India, where he defeated King Porus who had come against him with an army riding on elephants. He returned to Babylon and died after a drunken feast in June 323BC.

After Alexander's death his family was killed and the kingdom was divided among his **four generals** who then ruled the world from India to Europe. The Grecian Empire's control over Jerusalem lasted from 332BC to 63BC, a period of 269 years, after which we find the Roman Empire taking centre stage.

THE FOURTH KINGDOM-LEGS OF IRON

The greatest attention is given to the fourth kingdom which was to arise in the earth, and it is described as legs of iron, feet part iron and part clay, and its final stage; 10 toes. This fourth kingdom "*breaks in pieces and subdues all things*" (Dan. 2:40).

In its early stages the fourth kingdom would have the strength of the iron, but in its latter stages the feet and toes would be a mixture of strength and weakness, partly iron and partly clay.

In its final stage the fourth kingdom would be have 10 parts, and

"in the days of these kings (10 kings) shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed" (Dan. 2:44).

The last stage of the fourth kingdom will bring to an end the "*Times of the Gentiles*"(Luke 21:24); Gentile powers will no longer tread down Jerusalem. This will bring in the promised kingdom of Christ on earth.

Without any doubt the fourth kingdom is the **Roman Empire** which took control of Jerusalem in 63BC. The Imperial stage of the Roman Empire continued from Caesar Augustus (31BC - became Emperor 27BC) till

Rome was overrun by the Visigoths in AD410, Vandals in 455AD, and the last western emperor, Romulus Augustus, was deposed in 476AD. **Imperial Rome** therefore continued for 506 years, **but this was not the end of the Roman Empire.**

BYZANTINE ROMAN EMPIRE

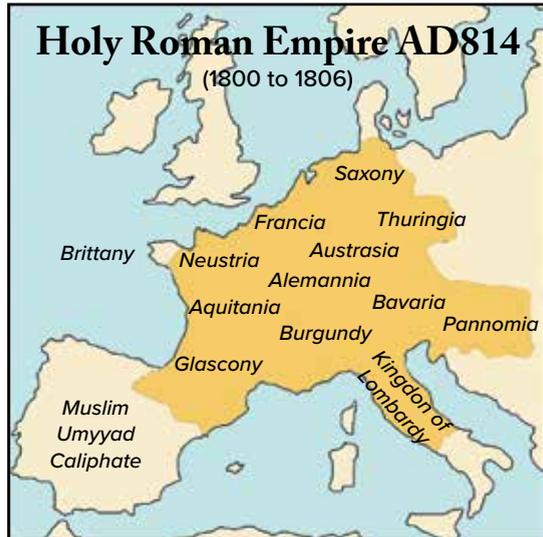
The Roman Empire was partitioned into Eastern and Western Empires in AD258 although reunited for a while under Emperor Constantine who moved the seat of government to Constantinople in AD330.

The Byzantine Roman Empire in the east continued from AD330 until Constantinople was captured by the Ottoman Turks in 1453; a period of 1,123 years.

THE PAPACY AND THE "HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE"

Meanwhile in Rome we see the Church gaining more and more power. The bishops of Rome, because of their association with the Western emperors, had assumed a position of authority over other bishops, which ultimately led to the formation of the papacy in the time of Pope Gregory the Great (AD590-604).

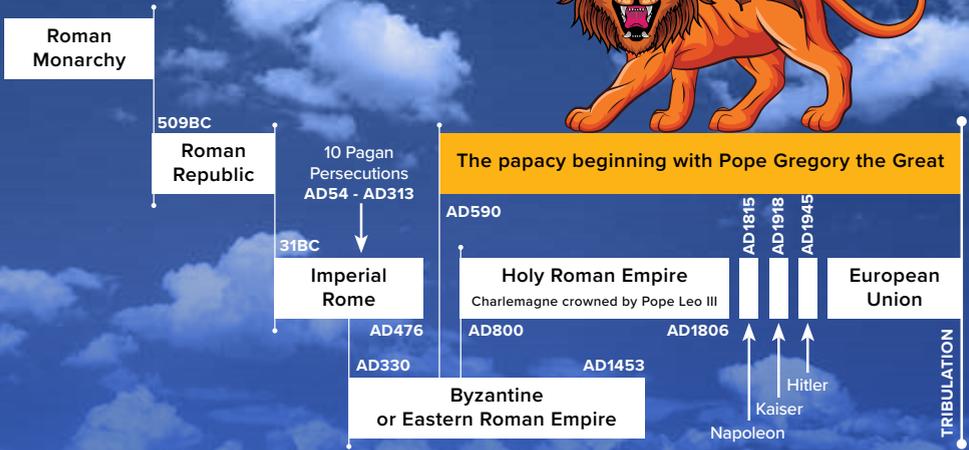
In AD800 Pope Leo III separated from the eastern empire and crowned Charlemagne, the king of Germany, as Emperor of a new empire in the west known as the "Holy Roman Empire." Of the 66 emperors of the Holy Roman Empire, 31 were appointed by the Pope of the day and were usually either the king of Germany or the king of Austria.



In the time of Napoleon (1806) the last emperor, Francis II, renounced the title of "Emperor" and the "Holy Roman Empire" ceased. It had continued as **the secular arm of the papacy** for much of 1,006 years.

The Roman Empire

The 4th World Empire



NAPOLEON, KAISER AND HITLER

Under Emperor Napoleon there was a bold attempt to unite all of Europe. He was proclaimed **King of Italy** in the cathedral at Milan, captured the Middle East and became master of Egypt. By 1812 he had much of Europe under his control or allied to him, including eastern and central Europe; Spain, Italy and Norway. Napoleon even captured Moscow, but failed to hold it. In 1814 Napoleon abdicated as Emperor and was exiled to the Island of Elbe. In 1815 he escaped and reorganised, but was finally defeated at the Battle of Waterloo. He died on the Island of St Helena in the South Atlantic in 1821.

The next attempt to reunite Europe was made by Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany in 1914-18 (World War I). The title “Kaiser” is the German for Caesar. The title was first assumed by the Prussian king, Kaiser Wilhelm I, in 1870, following the unification of Germany and the formation of the German Empire. Kaiser Wilhelm II was the grandson of Kaiser Wilhelm I. The Kaiser’s attempt to extend the German Empire to embrace all of Europe failed in 1918 and he was forced to abdicate.

In 1939 another attempt was made to unite all of Europe; this time by Adolf Hitler. With Italy and Spain as partners Hitler's armies rampaged across Europe. Hitler claimed that his "Third Reich" would last for 1,000 years, but in 1945 his army and nation lay in ruins.

EUROPEAN UNION (EU)

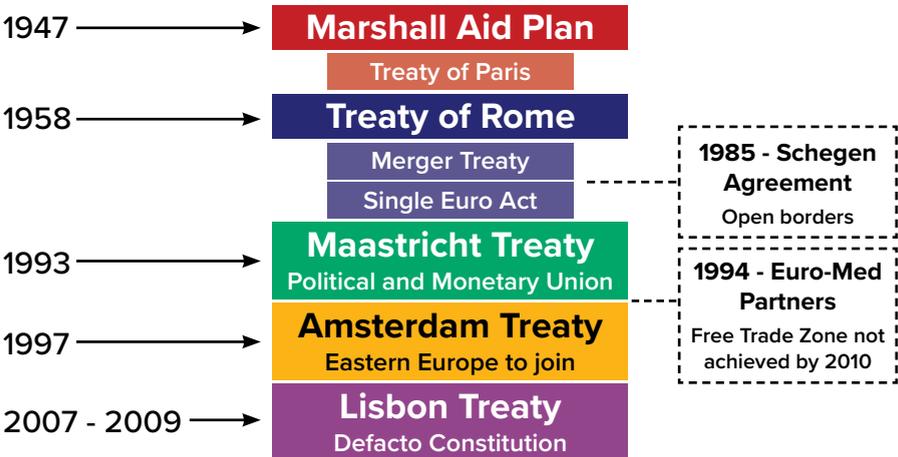
Following the failed attempts of Napoleon, the Kaiser, and Hitler to create a new Roman Empire, it was decided by the nations that the better way to achieve European unity was to work for an economic and political union, and thus prevent future wars.

After WWII America provided \$14 billion in what was known as the **Marshall Aid Plan** for the reconstruction of Europe. It was important to America to have a united and strong Europe in view of the global threat of International Communism promoted by the Soviet Union.

At first Europe formed into two separate economic communities known as the "Inner Six" (EEC) and the "Outer Seven" (EFTA). The EEC membership originally included only Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands, and was bound together by treaties. The following are the most important of these treaties:

- 1) The **Treaty of Rome** approved in 1958 laid the foundation for European Union.
- 2) The **Maastricht Treaty** implemented in 1993 agreed to economic and monetary union on the one hand, and political union on the other.

EU Treaties



- 3) The **Amsterdam Treaty** implemented in 1997 extended the provisions of the Maastricht Treaty and provides for the entry of central and eastern European countries which gained independence after the breakup of the Soviet Union in the period 1989 to 1991.
- 4) The **Lisbon Treaty** was signed in a Portuguese Catholic monastery in 2007 and is a defacto constitution. It establishes the positions of a President and a Foreign Affairs minister to lead Europe and gives greater powers to the European Parliament.

In 2016, after Britain voted to leave the EU, there were 27 member nations with a population of approximately 440 million. Negotiations are continuing with other nations. Turkey has made application but is unlikely to achieve membership. The EU has a common currency, the Euro, which has a strong economic and political influence.

The Schengen Agreement established in 1985 is eliminating internal borders and most countries in the EU now do not require border checks.

The EU views the Mediterranean as a European Lake and has begun to establish a Free Trade Zone around its shores. The initial goal was to have this in place by the year 2010 but this was not achieved. This trade initiative would provide a market of 200 million people in the developing countries of North Africa and the Middle East. The sphere of influence of the EU would then be similar to that of the old Roman Empire at its zenith.

Moves were taken in 2016 to develop an EU army independent of the NATO force to meet Russian aggression on the eastern border.

THE FINAL STAGE OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE-TEN TOES

The final stage of the Roman Empire will see **a division of Europe into 10 states** that will agree to give their allegiance to a man who the Bible calls the Antichrist. He is also called “*the beast*”, “*the man of sin*”, and “*the son of perdition*.” We will see more of this personality when we consider Daniel’s vision as recorded in Daniel chapter 7. This division into 10 states is symbolised by the **10 toes** of the image and corresponds to the **10 horns** of the beast in Daniel ch. 7, and in Revelation chapters 12,13, and 17. In Rev. 17:12 we are told:

*“The ten horns . . .are ten kings, which have received **no kingdom as yet**; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.”*

Daniel 7:24-25 confirms that these 10 kings are **future** kings:

*“The **ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise**: and another shall rise **after them**; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the most High...”*

Thus far we have seen that the **fourth kingdom**, symbolised by the legs, feet and toes of the image, represents the Roman Empire in its various forms. Under Imperial Rome it had the strength of the iron, but under the “Holy” Roman Empire and papacy it was like iron and clay - partly strong and partly weak. As we approach the end of the twentieth century we see a revival of the old Roman Empire, which shows every promise of becoming the dominant world power ready for the appearance of Antichrist and the 10 horns (kings).

CHRIST’S SECOND COMING- THE STONE FROM HEAVEN

Finally, Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream

*“a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image **upon his feet** that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces...and the stone that smote the image **became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth**” (Dan. 2:34-35).*

This stone from heaven represents the Lord Jesus Christ at His second coming. The Lord Jesus Christ will smite the nations when He comes again as indicated in the following Scriptures:

*“When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, **in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God**, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord” (2 Thess. 1:7-8).*

*“Out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should **smite the nations**: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God” (Rev. 19:15).*

*“For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle...Then shall the Lord go forth, and **fight against those nations**, as when he fought in the day of battle” (Zech. 14:2-3).*

*“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall **punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth**. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit” (Isa. 24:21-22).*

The picture of a stone (meteorite) hurtling from space is terrifying indeed, but nothing to compare with the second coming of the “Rock of Ages.”

The period of Gentile world power concludes with the return of Christ. After this we see Christ’s kingdom established as symbolised by the mountain which fills the whole earth.

A mountain is used elsewhere in Scripture to represent nations. Isaiah states:

*“And it shall come to pass in the last days, that **the mountain of the LORD’S house** shall be established in the **top of the mountains**, and shall be exalted **above the hills**; and **all nations shall flow unto it**... And he shall judge among **the nations**, and shall rebuke many people”* (Isa. 2:1-4).

In Matthew’s Gospel chapters 24 and 25 we read that Christ will return immediately after the Tribulation, and one of the first things to occur will be the judgment of the **living nations** that survive the Tribulation. Those who are saved will go alive into the millennial kingdom, but the unsaved will go away into everlasting punishment. The events will be as follows:

*“**Immediately after the tribulation** of those days shall the sun be darkened... and **then** shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and **then** shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory”* (Matt. 24:29-30).

*“**When** the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, **then** shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be **gathered all nations**: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. **Then** shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, **inherit the kingdom**”* (Matt. 25:31-34).

The long-awaited kingdom of God will only be established after the **Times of the Gentiles** is fulfilled. The nation of Israel will have repented of her rejection of Messiah during the Tribulation, and Christ personally will reign over the earth. The “*ten toes*”, representing the “*ten kings*” who receive power with Antichrist, will therefore be the last stage of the fourth Gentile empire to tread down Jerusalem.

*“And **in the days of these kings** shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and **it shall stand for ever**”* (Dan. 2:44).

DANIEL'S DREAM - DANIEL CHAPTER 7

The **second** outline of the *Times of the Gentiles* was given in a dream to Daniel. He saw four beasts coming up out of the great sea as the four winds of heaven “*strove on the great sea*” (the Mediterranean Num. 34:6-7; Josh. 1:4). The first beast was a **lion** with eagle’s wings, the second a **bear** with three ribs in its mouth, the third was a **leopard** with four wings and four heads, and the fourth beast was “*dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth.*”

This fourth beast also had **ten horns** out of which came another **little horn**. The **little horn** plucked up three of those former horns. This “*little horn*” assumed human characteristics with “*eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things*”(Dan. 7:8).

Finally Daniel saw one like the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, and to Him is given

“dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed” (Dan. 7:14).

The interpretation of Daniel’s dream is similar to that which we have seen in Daniel chapter 2. To Nebuchadnezzar it appeared like a glorious image, but to saintly Daniel, as wild beasts. Our heart condition will always determine how we view the world scene! The ungodly will delight in the world’s glitter and glamour but the believer will see it as “vanity fair,” for the world system has no time for God and is passing away.

FOUR BEASTS FROM THE GREAT SEA - THE MEDITERRANEAN

Daniel’s dream, like the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, described the span of time from 606BC when Jerusalem was first “*trodden down of the Gentiles*” (Luke 21:24) until the second coming of Jesus Christ, as shown in the graphic of the four beasts on page 54. The interpretation given in Scripture is concise.

“These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the most High (saved Israel) shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever” (Dan. 7:17-18).

Very briefly we are given the meaning of the entire dream, but then further details are provided concerning the fourth beast.

Firstly note that the four great beasts come up from the “*great sea*” after the

“four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea”.

The **“great sea”** is the Mediterranean Sea. This can be firmly established in the following Scriptures(Num. 34:6,7; Deut. 1:7; Josh. 9:1; 15:12,47; 23:4; Ezek. 47:10,15,19,20; and Ezek. 48:28).

The **“four winds of heaven”** represent four angelic beings which do God’s bidding. In Zech. 6:1-3 they are seen as four chariots with red, black, white, and grised and bay horses, and we are told:

*“These are the **four spirits** (angelic beings) **of the heavens**, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth” (Zech. 6:5).*

All four world kingdoms occupied much of the land around the Mediterranean Sea, including Israel and Egypt.

In 1996 the Mediterranean was described as a **European Lake**. We have already pointed out that by the year 2010 the EU expected to have in place Free Trade arrangements with most North African and Middle East countries bordering the Mediterranean. It is called Euro-Med. Europe needs external markets, and the North African and Middle Eastern developing nations located on her doorstep are a golden opportunity. Large aid packages are planned to encourage participation.

***ALION WITH EAGLE’S WINGS -
THE BABYLONIAN EMPIRE***

The symbols of the four beasts describe each succeeding empire. The lion with eagle’s wings clearly identifies the Babylonian Empire, since sculptures of lions with wings guarded the gates of the royal palaces at Babylon. The Processional Way at Babylon ran through the Ishtar gate and had walls lined with about 120 lions on glazed bricks, symbolising the goddess Ishtar.



But then we read that the lion was

“plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man’s heart was given to it” (Dan. 7:4).

Nebuchadnezzar’s seven years of insanity are no doubt referred to when we read,

*“Let his heart be changed from man’s, and let **a beast’s heart** be given unto him” (Dan. 4:16).*

As a consequence, for seven years Nebuchadnezzar

“did eat grass as oxen... till his hairs were grown like eagles’ feathers, and his nails like birds’ claws” (Dan. 4:33).

After seven years Nebuchadnezzar’s reason returned and he was restored to his throne. He acknowledged and praised the King of heaven. Hence we read that

“a man’s heart was given to it” (Dan. 7:4).

A BEAR WITH THREE RIBS IN ITS MOUTH - THE PERSIAN EMPIRE



The three ribs in the mouth of the bear are heard to say, *“Arise, devour much flesh.”* These three ribs refer to the three core nations that made up the great Persian Empire. They were **Media, Babylon and Persia**. The conquests of these three nations which amalgamated to form the Persian Empire are aptly described as devouring much flesh, for Persian armies overran Egypt, Asia Minor, and even Greece! Herodotus, the Greek historian, claimed

that when they crossed the Hellespont to enter Greece they brought an army of 2 million men and as many servants. This appears to be exaggerated and was more likely about 180,000 fighting men.

A LEOPARD WITH FOUR HEADS AND FOUR WINGS - THE GRECIAN EMPIRE

The leopard with 4 heads and 4 wings described the Grecian Empire which overthrew the vast Persian armies and neutralised their Mediterranean navy. It was led by Alexander the Great who, with lightning speed, in three decisive battles broke the power of Persia.

After Alexander’s death at Babylon his family was killed and the kingdom was divided among his four generals, thus fulfilling the symbolism of the four wings and the four heads of the leopard.



A BEAST WITH IRON TEETH AND TEN HORNS - THE ROMAN EMPIRE

More is said about the fourth beast than all others before it. Daniel was deeply impressed by the vision of the fourth beast, and said,

“Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast” (Dan. 7:19).

The character of the Roman Empire has changed over the centuries but it has always existed in one form or another. Details are shown in the chart on page 61.



Europe is now coming together under the banner of the EU and has a combined military force (NATO), a European parliament, a president, a police force, and many other associated activities including a space agency. In 1999 Europe introduced a common currency; the Euro, which will assist political union. It has a common foreign policy, a common social policy, and common security system!

Under the Schengen Agreement it is planned to allow free travel without border checks between member countries. By 2016 most countries had signed the Schengen Agreement.

Since the release of the eastern European countries in 1989, and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, many more countries were added to the EU.

The population of the 28 member nations prior to Britain's exit in 2016 was approximately 500 million. Great efforts have been made to allay Russia's fears of a superpower forming on her western border, and security treaties were signed in May and July 1997 between Russia/NATO and Ukraine/NATO. These treaties permitted eastern European countries to join NATO. During the Kosovo crisis Hungary, Romania, and Poland were hurriedly admitted to NATO so that Russia could not fly supplies and men to support Serbia. When Russia requested permission to fly over these countries, permission was refused.

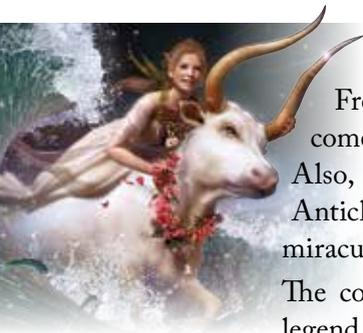
Europe's defence is currently maintained by NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation), which was originally set up by the United States during the cold war with the USSR to prevent the spread of international communism. In 2016 the EU began to form its own army.

It is interesting to observe efforts by Russia to revive the old Soviet Union under the banner of the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States), and also Russia's trade and military agreements with the Muslim world, especially Iran and Turkey. A Russian trade route through Iran, from the Caspian Sea to the Indian Ocean, was officially opened in 2002 allowing trade with India and the Far East to reduce travel time by thirteen days. In 2016 Russia has naval and airforce bases in Syria and is building a nuclear power plant in Turkey. Russia has already completed construction of one nuclear power plant in Iran and has plans to build more.

Finally the fourth empire is to have **10 divisions** represented by the **ten toes** of Nebuchadnezzar's dream and the **10 horns** of Daniel's dream. The **"little horn," Antichrist**, is to arise from among these 10 horns. From other Scriptures, such as Revelation chapters 13 and 17, it is clear that the **"little horn"** of Dan 7 will be the Antichrist, and it will be he who will lead the Roman Empire at the time of Christ's second coming. After this, Christ will set up His everlasting kingdom.

Seventh Day Adventists claim the Roman Empire broke up into ten kingdoms in AD476, but history does not support this view. Scripture says, *"In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed"* (Dan. 2:44). The ten kings and the Antichrist must be alive **when Christ returns**.

Preterists claim the *"ten horns"* and *"little horn"* were Roman rulers from Pompey (63BC) to Emperor Vespasian (AD70), and that Christ returned "spiritually" in AD70. They also claim the *"ten horns"* represent ten Roman provinces, whereas there were actually 54 Roman provinces. When Christ returns, *"every eye shall see him"* (Rev. 1:7). This did not happen in AD70.



THE HARLOT WOMAN RIDES THE BEAST (REVELATION CH. 17)

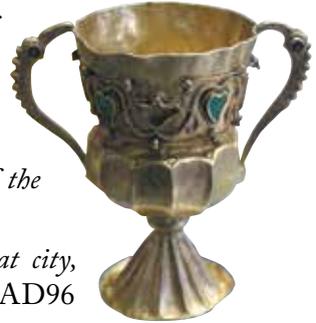
From Revelation ch. 17 we learn that the fourth beast comes to power under the guidance of a "harlot woman." Also, from Revelation chs 13 and 19 we can see that Antichrist has assistance from a *"false prophet"* who has miraculous powers.

The concept of a woman riding a beast comes from the legend of the Greek god Zeus, the father of the Greek gods,

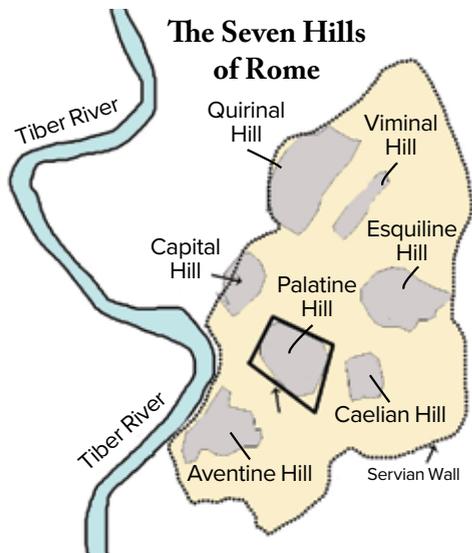
who was supposed to have sought the hand of the daughter of the King of Tyre in marriage but was refused so he turned himself into a white bull. When the maiden became friendly and rode upon the bull, he leaped into the Mediterranean and swam to Crete after which he turned himself back into Zeus and married the maiden who was **named Europa**.

The Bible identifies the harlot woman and we can be in no doubt who she is from clues given in Scripture.

- 1) **She is international and political.** She is involved with the “*kings of the earth*” and sits upon “*many waters*”, which we are told are “*peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues (languages)*” (Rev. 17:1,2,15).
- 2) **She is religious and idolatrous** for she is “*MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS*” (Rev. 17:5). In John’s day the “mystery religions” of Rome were well known. Also, idolatry in Scripture is called spiritual whoredom and adultery (Ezek. 16:1-36; 23:1-30; Hos. 1:2; 4:12-19).
- 3) **She is exceedingly rich.** She is “*arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls*” (Rev. 17:4).
- 4) **She holds a golden cup** in her hand, “*full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication (idolatry)*” (Rev. 17:4).
- 5) **She is a persecutor of Christians** and is “*drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus*” (Rev. 17: 6).
- 6) **She sits on seven mountains** and is “*that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth*”, i.e. in AD96 (Rev. 17:9,18).
- 7) **She identifies with the beast** which we know is both the Roman Empire and its final ruler. She obviously has influence over the beast for she holds the reins (Rev. 17:3, 11).



When all these clues are combined, we can come to no other conclusion than that the harlot woman is apostate Christendom headed up by the Church of Rome. The Church of Rome is **international and political**. It is a religious and **idolatrous** system; its people are “*made drunk with the wine of her fornication*” being stupified by superstitious material items such as medals, crucifixes, rosary beads etc. The golden cup of **the Mass** is celebrated as a continual sacrifice, which constitutes a blasphemous, idolatrous act.



From an article on the EU in
Time magazine 9 December 1991

Rome is known as the “**city of seven hills**” and was reigning over the kings of the earth when John wrote the Book of Revelation in AD96!

In the days of Imperial Rome the Caesars were the head of the pagan mystery religious system, claimed deity, and demanded their subjects offer sacrifices to them on pain of death. Many thousands of Christians died rather than submit to Caesar worship.

During the 1,006 years of the “Holy Roman Empire” the papacy appointed emperors, beginning with Charlemagne the king of Germany, and manipulated the secular powers **to destroy “heretics”(Christians)** and Jews. Today, with the revival of the old Roman Empire, we see it being guided (ridden) by the Church.

It is now a well established historical fact that the Vatican worked with Hitler and provided the “Ratline” escape route for Nazi war criminals after WW2! The Vatican Bank has been used to store Nazi gold, and Europe has been called “Fortress Christendom”.

Last-days Christianity is an ecumenical hotch-potch including idolatrous, liberal, charismatic, and humanistic religions. It has no anchor secured in the Word of God, for it has replaced the authority of a verbally inspired Bible with human reasoning, social programs, experimental religion, rock music and/or church dogma.

It is interesting to note that the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, who is the leader of 250 million people from Orthodox Churches, stated in May 1997, “Preserving the unity of Europe is the foremost duty of all churches today”, according to *New Europe* 24/5/97.

Plans were announced in May 1997 to arrange a meeting of Pope John Paul, the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church, and Bartholomew I in Austria. This was the first meeting of Orthodox and Catholic Churches since the Great Schism in 1054. There is no doubt the harlot woman is riding the beast. Subsequent Popes have become more ecumenical and dialogue with even non-Christian religions has been maintained as the inter-Faith Movement has gained momentum.

WHEN WILL ANTICHRIST BE REVEALED?

We read that the 10 horns of the fourth beast are 10 kings which “*receive power as kings one hour with the beast*”(Rev. 17:12), so the Revived Roman Empire must ultimately be **divided into ten parts**.

In 2016 there were **28 nations** in the EU before Britain voted to exit. The Schengen Agreement has removed most of the internal borders but ultimately it must be divided into **ten states**.

According to Dan. 9:27 Antichrist’s kingdom will last for seven years. At first he will appear as a man of peace confirming a 7-year treaty with Israel allowing the Jews to rebuild their Temple (Rev. 11:1-2). After 3½ years he will break his treaty with Israel and cause Jewish sacrifices to cease (Dan. 9:27). At that point he will be demon possessed from the bottomless pit and set himself up as God in the Temple (2 Thess. 2 :3-4). Paul wrote:

*“Let no man deceive you by any means: for **that day** (the Day of the Lord) shall not come, except there come a falling away (lit. “**the Departure**”) first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so **that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.**”*

A “*falling away*” is literally in the Greek “**the departure**”, and in the context refers to the **departure of the Church at the Rapture**.

Thus Scripture teaches that Antichrist will not appear until **AFTER the departure of the Church at the Rapture** and Paul repeats this fact:

“And now ye know what withholdeth that he (Antichrist) might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth (hinders) (the Holy Spirit indwelling the Church) will let (hinder),

*UNTIL He be **taken out** of the way. And **THEN** shall that Wicked (one) be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume...with the brightness of his coming” (2 Thess. 2:6-8).*

In the light of these Scriptures, Antichrist cannot appear until the Church is raptured, but apostate Christendom led by the papacy, will continue on into the Great Tribulation in fellowship with Antichrist, UNTIL the ten kings burn her with fire (Rev. 17:16-17).

For the second 3¹/₂ years Antichrist will seek to wipe out Israel who, as a result of a massive Russian/Islamic invasion in the first half of the Tribulation, will have turned to the Lord Jesus as their Messiah (Ezek. 39:22-29). God will destroy the Russian/Islamic army and only one sixth will escape (Ezek. 39:2) to Siberia (Joel 2:20). The land of Magog (Russia, north of the Black Sea) will be burned. **The Russian/Islamic invasion of Israel is dealt with in Section 4.**

Antichrist will not tolerate competition, even from apostate Christendom, and **the ten kings will burn the harlot woman** (Rome) with fire (Rev. 17:16-17). Obviously, the harlot woman can't be Antichrist as Seventh day Adventists assert.

During the last 3¹/₂ years Russian and Islamic power will have been broken (Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39), British and American power possibly broken (Ezek. 39:6), and all remaining nations will be demonically drawn to the battle of Armageddon (Rev. 16:12-16).

THE JUDGMENT OF ANTICHRIST.

When Christ returns the Beast will be destroyed.

*“And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him...These both were **cast alive** into a lake of fire burning with brimstone” (Rev. 19:20).*

John wrote that the beast will be cast “alive” into the lake of fire but Daniel prophesied that the beast would be slain.

*“I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till **the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame**” (Dan. 7:11).*

There is no contradiction; both are true. The beast receives his resurrection body after being slain. When Christ returns the Tribulation martyrs are raised (Rev. 20:4) and Antichrist with all who follow him are slain and raised to “*shame and everlasting contempt*” (Dan. 12:2). At the end of the millennium, when Satan is cast into the lake of fire, it is “*where the beast*

and the false prophet are” (Rev. 20:10). Only resurrected unsaved persons go to the lake of fire (gehenna); their souls go to hades at death to await the resurrection to damnation and the Great White Throne Judgment.

Paul confirms the judgment of Antichrist at Christ’s return:

“Then shall that Wicked (one) be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming” (2 Thess. 2:8).

In Daniel 11:45 we read:

“He shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas (Dead Sea and Mediterranean Sea) in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and NONE SHALL HELP HIM”.

No longer will the Temple in Jerusalem be occupied by “the man of sin” and when Christ returns the redeemed nation of Israel will welcome her Messiah and

“shall look upon me (Christ) whom they have pierced (at Calvary)” (Zech. 12:10).

The *Times of the Gentiles* will then be finished, and Christ will establish His kingdom which will begin with the 1,000-year millennial reign and continue into the new heaven and new earth that will never pass away.

MYSTERY BABYLON, BABYLON, MECCA, OR ROME?

The question of whether the ancient city of Babylon will be rebuilt in the last days is a matter of interest to many. Some Christians have thought it would be reconstructed, but Scripture states that once destroyed and left desolate as it has been for centuries, it will **never be rebuilt** (Jer. 50:39).

Some have suggested that *Mystery Babylon* might be Mecca but *Mystery Babylon* is idolatrous and Islam is not. Mecca is in a Valley, not on seven hills, and is 80 km from the Red Sea. When *Mystery Babylon* burns, the ships’ captains will be able to watch her burn (Rev. 18:17-18). Rome’s suburbs stretch to the coast.

Mystery Babylon is clearly **identified with Rome** and is described as a harlot woman in close relationship with the revived Roman Empire just as the Vatican has exercised political power over Europe in the past through the Holy Roman Empire and now through political parties in the EU.

Antichrist and the ten kings (ten horns) who make up the **revived Roman Empire** will turn against her at the end of the Tribulation as Antichrist demands exclusive, universal worship (Rev. 17:16-17; 18:1-24).



Tower of Babel



The EU Parliament built like the Tower of Babel



Sculpture of a woman riding a beast outside the Council of Europe

The symbolism of a woman riding a beast is now commonly accepted as identification of the EU, and the new parliament building at Strasbourg has been designed to replicate the old paintings of the Tower of Babel.

The intention of the designers of the EU parliament building in Strasbourg has been stated: it was to feature an **unfinished** tower signifying that they intended to complete what was unfinished in the original Tower of Babel when God confused the languages. The very thought of doing such a thing can only be construed as defiance against Almighty God and a triumph for idolatry and false religion.

There are several paintings of the Tower of Babel which inspired the designers, Architecture Studio Europe, a Paris-based company, as they designed the Strasbourg parliament building. These paintings were produced by Matthieu Merian 1593-1650, Peter Bruegel 1525-1569, and Abel Grimmer (1604). Grimmer's painting is shown on page 76.

A caption, "many tongues, one voice", on an EU poster indicates the EU unashamedly identifies with ancient Babel, where men rejected the living God in favour of heathenism.

The EU actually has two parliament houses; one in Brussels and the newer building in Strasbourg. Parliament meets in Strasbourg only one week of each month, except in August when they

do not meet at all. The Strasbourg building opened in 1999, has 1,133 offices, and cost \$400 million. It is located on the French side of the German border and was the result of intense lobbying by the French government in 1992.

Many examples could be given of the symbol of a woman riding the beast on coins, telephone cards, on book covers etc, all in relation to Europe. The Bible indicates that Gentile world power began with Babylon and will conclude with the fourth world empire, Rome, which will identify with a harlot woman known as Mystery Babylon. **There is no fifth kingdom** before Christ returns to reign!

THE MID-POINT OF THE TRIBULATION

It is important to remember that Antichrist's kingdom does not gain universal power until the mid-point of the Tribulation after the Russian and Islamic forces have been destroyed on the mountains of Israel (Ezek. 38/39; Joel 2; Rev. 6:12-13), the land of Russia (Magog) has been burned, and the eastern nations have suffered the ravages of war from an army of 200 million (6th Trumpet). The bottomless pit must be opened to release **the demon that possesses the Antichrist** (Rev. 9:1-12) for it is said of him that *"he shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition"* (Rev. 17:8). The bottomless pit is not opened until the **fifth trumpet** judgment which occurs toward the end of the first half of the Tribulation.

At the mid-point of the Tribulation the scene in heaven and on earth changes drastically; Satan loses his place in heaven as Michael and his angels cast him into the earth (Rev. 12:7-10); Antichrist as a political leader becomes the Beast and the ten kings of the revived Roman Empire hand over power to him.

At this point the earth is devastated; Russia and Islam will have been already destroyed; four environmental judgments will have destroyed one third of the earth's vegetation and seas (Rev. 8) and possibly more than half the world population will have perished at the hands of Islam and due to conflict in Asia (Rev. 6:4-8; 9:15). It is only at this time that the False Prophet can promote the worship of the Beast and his image and demand that all should take the mark of the Beast in their forehead or right hand.

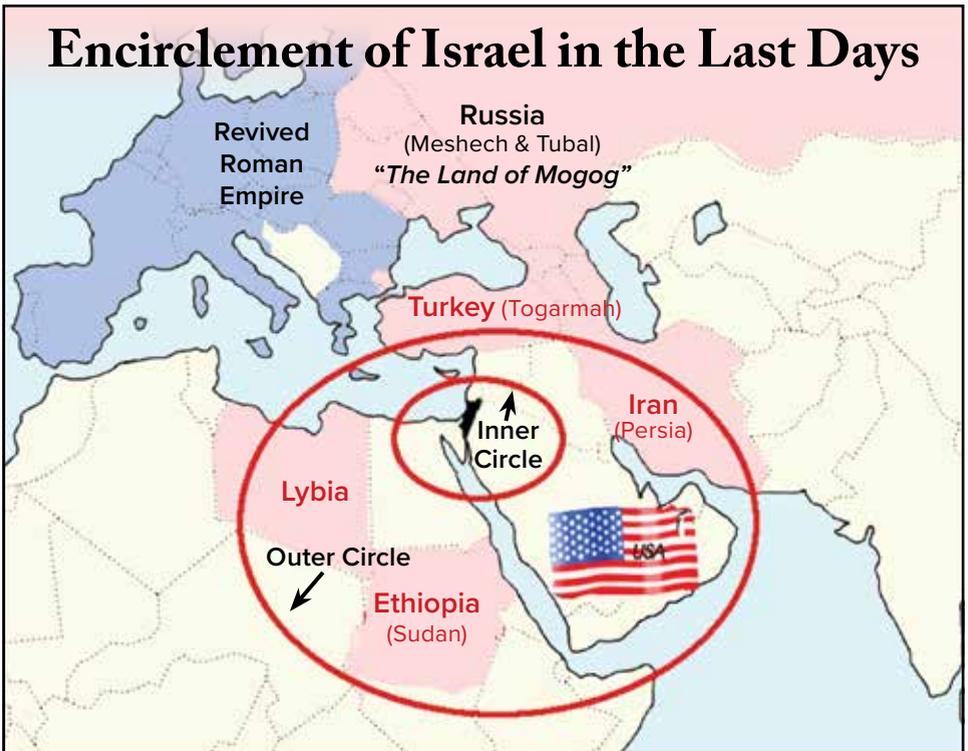
In the first half of the Tribulation there will be 144,000 Jewish men who turn to Christ soon after the Rapture; these will preach the Gospel of the kingdom to all nations (Matt. 24:14) and be martyred by the mid-point of the seven years (Matt. 10:23; Rev. 14:1-5).

Section 4

The Russian / Islamic Alliance and Israel's Repentance

*"Sheba & Dedan and the merchants of
Tarshish and the young lions thereof."*

Ezekiel 38:13



THE RUSSIAN/ISLAMIC ALLIANCE

During the coming Tribulation a universal state of war will exist, and to this all the prophecies of the last days bear strong testimony. Often the Old Testament prophets refer to this time as the *“Day of the Lord”*. Ezekiel, Joel, and Daniel draw attention to a massive northern invasion of Israel early in this period by Muslim nations led by Gog, the ruler of Russia. Because of the terrible persecution of Israel during the Great Tribulation, Jeremiah describes it as the *“time of Jacob’s trouble”*:

“For, lo, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the LORD: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it... Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob’s trouble; but he shall be saved out of it” (Jer. 30:3,7).

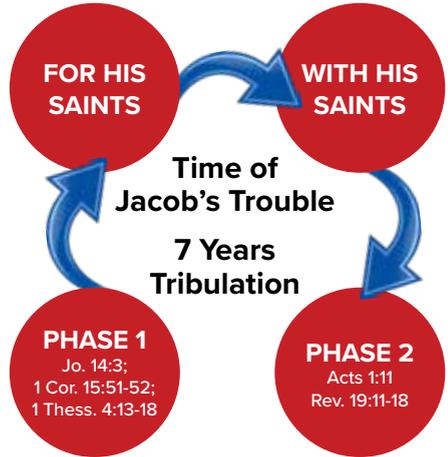
The reason why Ezekiel and Joel have given details of the Russian phase of the universal conflict is because of its bearing on the nation of Israel. It will be this invasion that brings God’s covenant people to repentance, and so both of these prophets make strong appeals for them to repent. Joel also describes the **final phase** of the Day of the Lord when **ALL NATIONS** will converge upon Jerusalem, thus indicating that the northern invasion is **separate from, and precedes** the battle of Armageddon (Joel 3:2).

In the foreknowledge of God, the Almighty is able to tell us what the outcome of both the Russian/Islamic invasion **and** the battle of Armageddon will be. The Russian invasion will bring Israel to repentance:

“The house of Israel shall know that I am the LORD their God from THAT DAY AND FORWARD” (Ezek. 39:22).

The battle of Armageddon will rescue Israel, judge Antichrist and the nations (Rev. 19:11-21; 20:1-7), and bring in Christ’s millennial kingdom.

“The day of the LORD cometh... For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle... Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle... And the LORD shall be king over all the earth...but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited” (Zech. 14:1-11).



THE NATIONS THAT WILL INVADE ISRAEL

Ezekiel prophesies a massive invasion of Israel and provides much detail as to the combatants and the outcome. A confederacy will be led by “Gog, the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal.”

The King James Version translates “Rosh” as “chief” (Ezek. 38:2-3), which is the correct **meaning** of the name. We note that all Hebrew names have meanings, and the translators have simply given us the meaning of the name “Rosh” instead of the name itself. The name “Gog” is in all probability a **title** given to an individual, such as President, King, Prime Minister or Pharaoh. The land which he rules is Magog, Meshech and Tubal.

Josephus, the first century Jewish historian, wrote:

“Gomer founded those whom the Greeks call Galatians (Galls) but were then called Gomerites. **Magog founded those that from him were named Magogites, but who are by the Greeks called Scythians...**from Javan, Ionia and all the Grecians are derived” (*Antiquities*, Book I Ch VI).

The location of the Scythians is well known in history so we can identify the land of Magog with precision. It is present-day Russia and Ukraine.

J.B.Bury, *History of Greece* (Page 234) states:

“**North of the Danube...** Walachia and Moldovia lived tribes which... the Greeks included under the general name of Scythian”.

Philips’ *World History - People, Dates and Events*, (Page16) records:

“Scythian peoples from **the steppes** begin raiding the Middle East 650BC”.

Halley’s Bible Handbook (Page 310) quotes Rawlinson as follows:

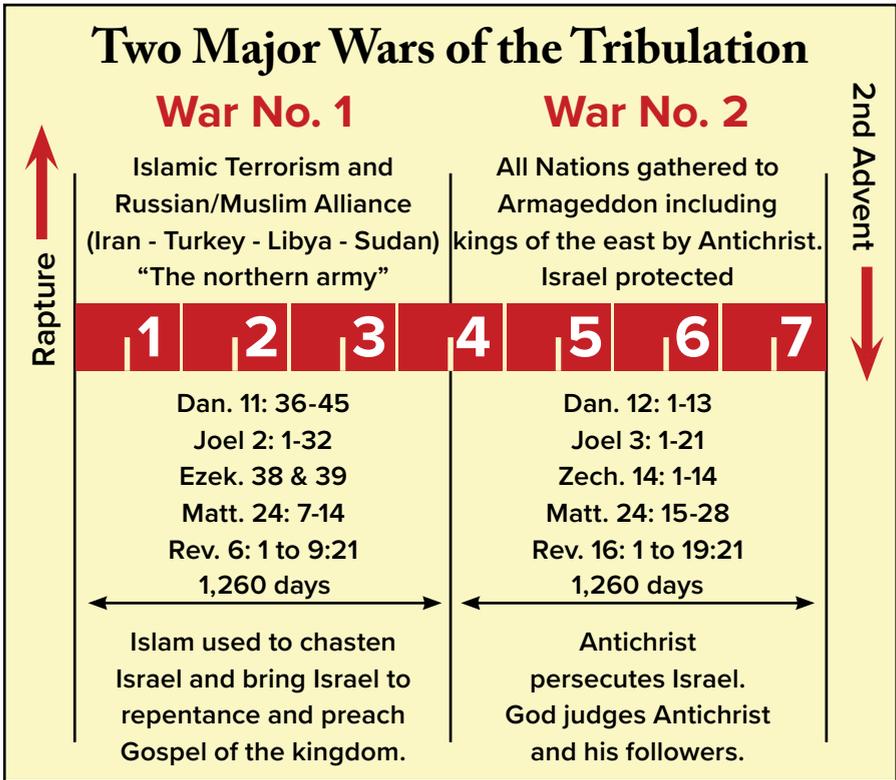
About 626BC, “Pouring through the passes of **the Caucasus...**horde after horde of the Scythians blackened the rich plains of the south”.

The *Oxford Encyclopedia of World History* describes the Scythians as:

“A group of Indo-European tribes that briefly occupied part of Asia Minor in the seventh century BC before being driven out by the Medes.

They subsequently **established a kingdom in southern Russia...**”

The Scythians were obviously the **descendants of Magog**. In all probability Meshech and Tubal gave their names to Moscow in western Russia and to Tobolsk which is east of the Ural Mountains where the **Tobol River** flows. Assyrian inscriptions state that the dominion of Sargon king of Assyria reached to “Tabal as far as Muski”, and “speaks several times of Mita, king of the Moschians”(New Biblical Guide Urquhart Vol II page 416). In any



case, Meshech and Tubal are located in the land of Magog, which is fixed by the location of the Scythians north of the Black Sea.

With Gog are listed peoples identified by their ancient family or tribal names.

"Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet: Gomer, and all his bands; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands: and many people with thee" (Ezek. 38:5-7).

If we go back to the days just after Noah's flood we will find the human race beginning all over again, and the names of the descendants of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, are given in Genesis chapter 10. All nations can trace their roots back to one of these three families.

Broadly speaking:

- a) The sons of **Japheth** travelled north and west from Ararat.
- b) The sons of **Shem** settled in the east. Abraham came from the line of Shem, and his descendants displaced the Canaanites.
- c) The sons of **Ham** settled in the land of Canaan, Egypt and Africa.

Many of the names occurring in Genesis 10 are preserved on ancient historical records in Assyria, in the writings of Herodotus (died 424BC), Josephus (first century AD), or other ancient histories. From these ancient historical sources it is clear that Magog, Meshech, Tubal, Gomer, the House of Togarmah, Sheba and Dedan all settled in areas as shown on the adjoining map, and as time went by no doubt they continued to push further afield.

Gomer is mentioned in Gen 10:2-3 as the first son of Japheth. He had three sons, Ashkenaz, Riphath and **Togarmah**. German Jews have long called themselves “Ashkenazi Jews”, and Gomer and Togarmah are both said to belong to the “*north quarters*”(Ezek. 38:6). **Togarmah settled in Armenia, or eastern Turkey** as we know it today, and has been identified with Phrygia in Asia Minor. Gomer and Togarmah occupied what we know as Turkey and spread around the Black Sea.

At the head of the list of countries joined to Russia is Persia (Iran). Ethiopia was known as Cush in Bible times and represented the black races of Africa **south of the Egyptian border**, or Sudan as we know it, while Libya represented the North African races who had different ethnic origins from the Arabs, notwithstanding their common Muslim culture. Today they are Muslim nations.

WHEN WILL ISRAEL BE INVADED?

The timing of the prophecies concerning the invasion of Israel is identified and there can be no mistake. There are actually four indications of **when** this invasion will occur:

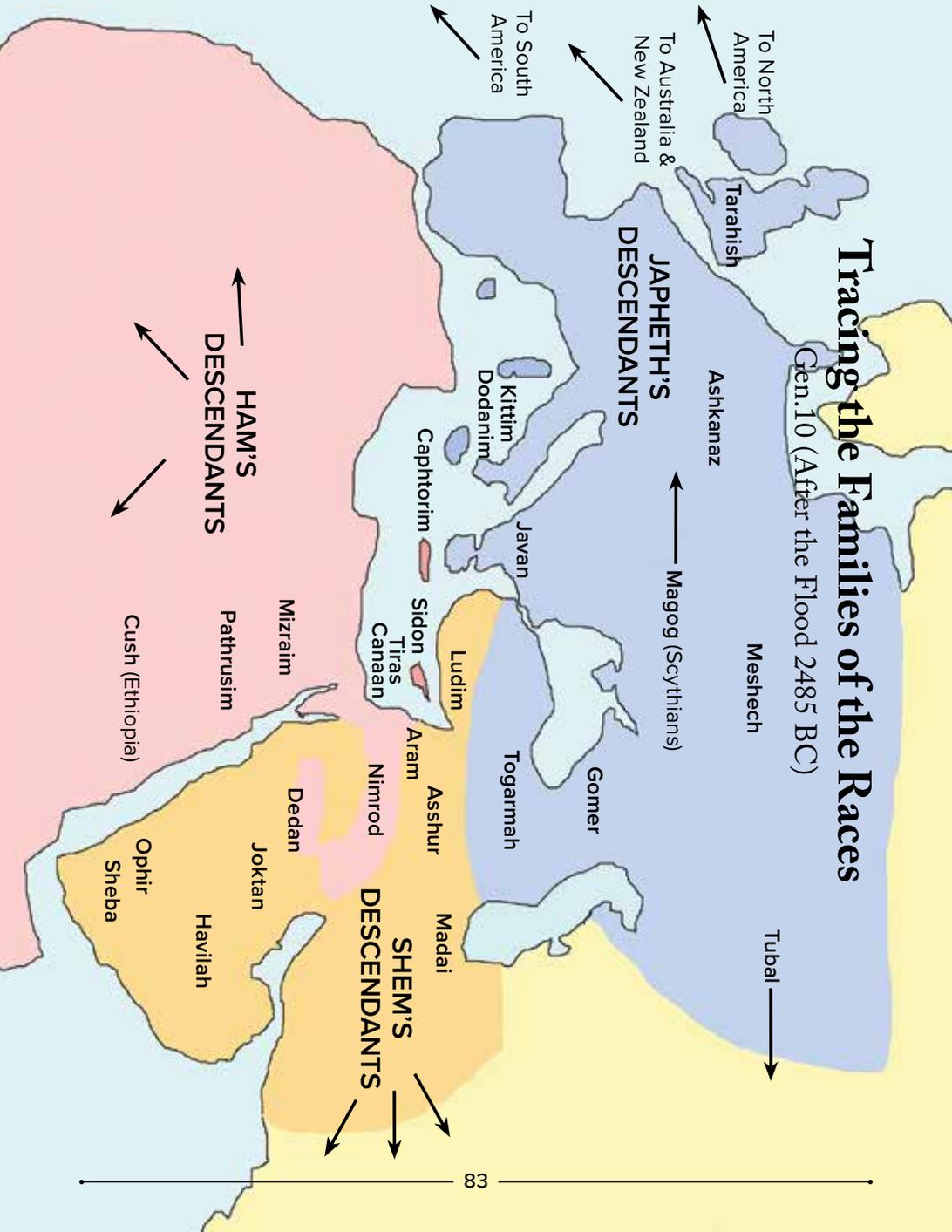
- 1) It will be in the “*latter days*”.
- 2) It will be in the “*day of the Lord*” (the Great Tribulation).
- 3) It will be when Israel has returned to the land, has developed the waste lands, and is militarily secure.
- 4) It will be at a time when the nations of Sheba and Dedan (ie. the countries of the Arabian Peninsula) are identified with Tarshish and its young lions (eg. the Britain, U.S.A. etc.).

1) IN THE “LATTER DAYS”

This invasion of Israel cannot be confused with other invasions from the north which have occurred throughout history, for the Assyrians came long before Ezekiel was born, and the last of the three Babylonian invasions had been completed one year before this prophecy was given.

Tracing the Families of the Races

Gen.10 (After the Flood 2485 BC)



There have been wars in the land involving Grecian, Roman, Arab, Ottoman Turk, and Crusader armies, but not one of these matches the description of Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39, nor have they involved the same nations. This invasion described by Ezekiel will occur in the “*latter days*”. God addresses Gog:

*“In the **latter years** thou shalt come into the land...against the mountains of Israel... and thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the **latter days**”* (Ezek. 38:8,16).

2) IT WILL BE IN THE “DAY OF THE LORD”

Joel places the invasion in the Day of the Lord, a term synonymous with the Great Tribulation, which immediately precedes Christ’s return to reign as King of kings. He says,

“The day of the Lord cometh... there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it” (Joel 2:1-2).

3) IT WILL BE WHEN ISRAEL HAS RETURNED

When Israel rejected Messiah and crucified Him, the nation brought itself under the chastening hand of God and received the judgments pronounced in the Palestinian Covenant (Deut 28-30). In AD70 the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and scattered the Jews throughout the empire.

For nearly 1900 years the Jews had no national home, but in 1948 Israel proclaimed itself a nation in the land and was recognised by the United Nations.

Since 1948 Israel has expanded both its population and its borders. In 2016 the **Jewish** population was 6.377 million out of a total population of 8.522 million and they can boast a defence force that has won four major wars against superior numbers. It has developed a high-tech defence industry which produces military equipment equal to the best in the world. It has 200 nuclear warheads, missiles, its own spy satellites, an aircraft industry and much more. In fact Israel exports its military technology to other nations and is jointly developing the most advanced weapons with the United States.

While Israel is under increasing threat, they nevertheless are secure with their own resources and the support of the United States. Scripture indicates that after the Rapture, Antichrist will confirm a covenant “*with many*” for seven years, and there is no doubt that this will include Israel, who will then have the added security of EU armies to support her. Ezekiel says of Gog:

*“Thou shalt say...I will go to them that are at rest **that dwell safely**...upon*

the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land” (Ezek. 38:11-12).

“Say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord GOD; In that day when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know it?” (Ezek. 38:14).

4) IT WILL BE WHEN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA IS IDENTIFIED WITH THE UNITED STATES.

The advances made by modern industry during the 20th century have been inextricably linked to the supply of vast quantities of oil and gas. World War I was lost by Germany because she failed to capture the oilfields at Baku on the Caspian Sea.

In WWII Germany again failed to secure her oil supply, and when her synthetic oil plants were bombed the wheels stopped. Japan’s war machine ground to a halt as the US submarine fleet sent most of her oil tankers to the bottom of the ocean.

The industrial nations are highly dependent on oil and gas for transport and industry, and 60% of the world’s known oil and natural gas resources are located in the Middle East. Western oil companies have led the field in oil and gas exploration, and as a result a strong link has been forged between the West and six Arab States in the Persian Gulf. Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, The United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Oman, **all have strong ties with the US** involving military treaties which guarantee their defence against rogue states such as Iran. The 1990-91 Gulf War, code named “Operation Desert Shield”, drove Saddam Hussein from Kuwait and was a demonstration of Western resolve to defend their oil and gas interests in the Persian Gulf.

When the Russian/Islamic armies move on Israel, the Bible says they will be challenged by

“Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof”.

These nations will say,

“Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?” (Ezek 38:13).

In 2013 Israel commenced extraction of gas from the large Tamar Gas Field off the coast at Haifa and in 2016 signed contracts for the development of the much greater **Leviathan Gas Field**. Russia is keen to acquire an interest since it competes with Russia’s supply pipelines through Turkey to the European

market. This could be some of the “*spoil*” attracting Russia and her allies. There may also be large oil deposits in the Golan Heights.

SHEBA AND DEDAN, THE ARABIAN PENINSULA

Sheba and Dedan’s descendants (Gen. 10:7; 25:3) undoubtedly are the people that settled in the Arabian Peninsula.

There are two Sheba and Dedans recorded in Scripture, and both can be traced to the Arabian Peninsula. The descendants of Abraham to Hagar and Keturah were given gifts and sent “*to the east country*” from Beer-sheba before Abraham died so they would not contend for the land that God had given to Isaac for an everlasting possession. The land east of Beer-sheba is northern Arabia, and we know from other Scriptures that these sons of Abraham to Keturah spread south over the full length of the Arabian Peninsula. These were one line from which the Arab people came.

The Arabs also descended from Eber’s son **Joktan**, the brother of **Peleg**. Why did God bother to give us the names of Joktan’s thirteen sons when the Divine line was to continue through Peleg to Abram, Isaac and Israel? The reason is clear: they were to occupy the Arabian Peninsula and be used of God to bring the nation of Israel to repentance in the last days. They were also to be part of the promises that God would make to Abraham about 250 years later, and would integrate with his seed born to Hagar and Keturah.

We sometimes forget that the Abrahamic Covenant includes unconditional promises that Abraham would become not only the father of “***a great nation***” (Gen. 12:2), Israel, but also that he would be “*a father of many nations*” (Gen. 17:5). The Arab nations are the fulfilment of that promise.

When Abraham sent the sons of Hagar and Keturah “*away from Isaac his son...eastward, unto the east country*” (Gen. 25:6), he was sending them to their cousins, the descendants of Eber through Joktan, who had been established in Arabia for more than two centuries.

According to *Unger’s Bible Dictionary*, all of the thirteen sons of Joktan became heads of tribes which settled in Arabia. Havilah was one of them, and when Moses wrote the Book of Genesis he mentioned the land of Havilah:

“*where there is gold; and the gold of that land is good*” (Gen. 2:11-12).

He also stated that “*bdellium and the onyx stone*” were to be found there (Gen. 2:12).

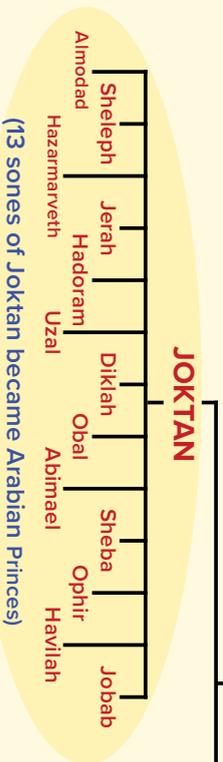
Ophir was another of Joktan’s sons, and we know that the goldfields at Ophir

Genealogy of the Arabs

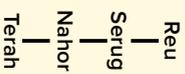
SHEM



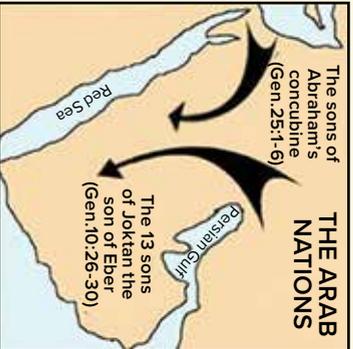
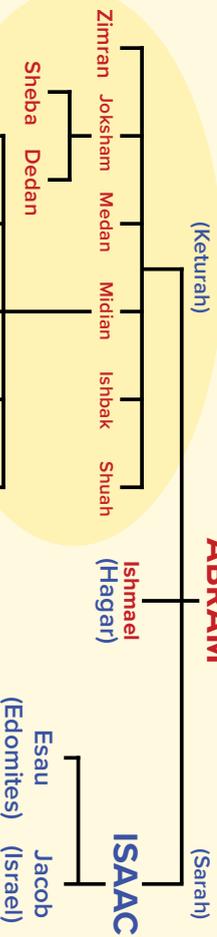
EBER (Hebrews)



PELEG



ABRAM



were located in southern Arabia; now called Yemen. Servants of Solomon and Hiram sent ships to the goldfields at Ophir and brought 450 talents of gold for the Temple (2 Chron. 8:18).

Sheba was a son of Joktan, and Abraham also had a grandson named Sheba. Archeologists have established that the kingdom of Sheba, namely the Sabaeans, who took Job's oxen (Job 1:15), were well established in Arabia. The Queen of Sheba, who was described by the Lord as "*the queen of the south*" (Matt. 12:42), came by camel with a great company to witness the wisdom of Solomon. She brought "*spices, and gold in abundance, and precious stones*" (2 Chron. 9:1).

We may safely say that over the past 4,000 years the sons of Abraham to Hagar and Keturah have **mingled** with the descendants of Joktan and now comprise the Arab people. Jeremiah refers to the "*kings of Arabia, and all the kings of the mingled people that dwell in the desert*" (Jer. 25:24).

The secular history of the Arabs, recorded by Josephus in the first century and by Greek and Roman historians, describes the original dwellers of Arabia in the main as **nomadic people living in tents** and refusing to be involved in agriculture or construction of cities. For this reason they have left few records.

The Rechabites referred to in Jeremiah chapter 35 appear to have been Arabs (Nabataeans), for they were faithful to their father who commanded them:

*"Ye shall **drink no wine**, neither ye, nor your sons for ever: neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any: but all your days ye shall **dwell in tents**; that ye may live many days in the land where ye be strangers"* (Jer. 35:6-7).

It seems there were three types of Arabs who made up the Nabatu kingdom and were known as Nabataeans. All were traders. In the south of Arabia there was the kingdom of Sheba (Sabaeans) that engaged in trade as far afield as India and China, and imported spices, frankincense, myrrh, animals, ivory, pearls, cotton, ginger, cinnamon, sugar, medicines, gold and silk (Ezek. 27:20-22). The seafaring Nabataeans were well known in the Red Sea as pirates who plundered commercial vessels.

The desert Nabataeans took the imported goods northward by camel train to the western markets of Tyre, where they were transhipped to Greece and Rome (Ezek. 27:20-22).

The northern Nabataeans settled in the land of Edom after 586BC when

Nebuchadnezzar's armies swept through as foretold by Ezekiel (Ezek. 25:12-14). **Nabataeans replaced the Edomites** and established a city called Rekem or Rekmu, which was renamed by the Romans, Petra. Its narrow entrance extends for over a kilometre and is no more than a few metres wide. This remarkable city carved out of the rock became a trading metropolis, and was so famous that mention of it is found in ancient Chinese writings.

The early families of the Nabataeans were descendants of Shem and had the knowledge of the true God. Moses' father-in-law was a priest of Midian, and records indicate that the Arab tribes were originally ruled over by priest-kings, just as Melchisedek was a priest-king. The Queen of Sheba acknowledged the LORD, for she said to Solomon:

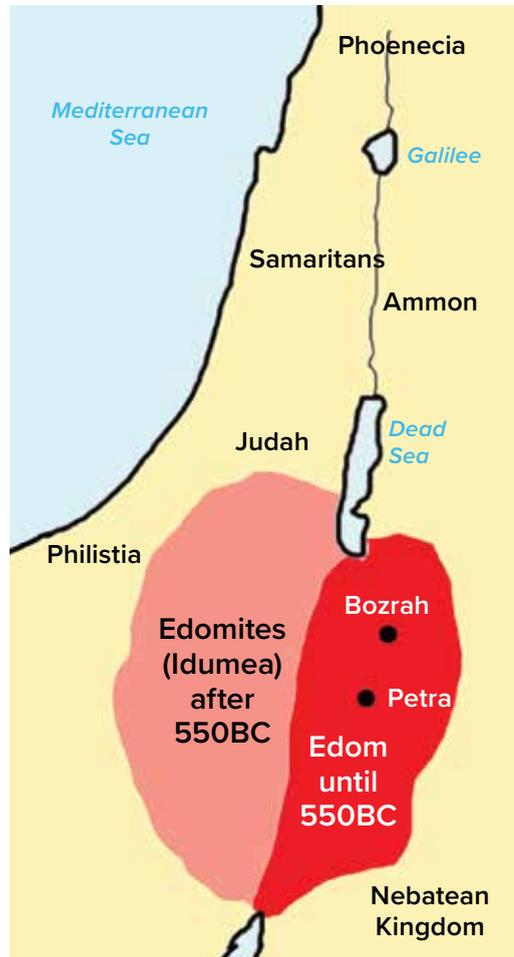
*"Blessed be the LORD thy God,
which delighted in thee, to set thee on
the throne of Israel..."* (1 Kings 10:9).

Over the centuries no doubt the truth of God became confused among the Arab races, and when Muhammad presented his false god, Allah, many became ardent Muslims, taking up the sword in jihad to convert the nations.

By AD638 Arab armies had captured Jerusalem and moved on to conquer the Middle East and North Africa. They reached Spain in AD711, but were finally driven out in 1492.

The Islamic culture has changed the Arab people from desert nomads living in tents to city dwellers.

Early in the twentieth century Arabs in Arabia rose up against the Ottoman Turk rulers and began to lay claim to the land of Palestine. After WWI they were given the land **east of the Jordan River, Syria, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia**. The land west of the Jordan has been partitioned, and in 1948 Israel declared its independence.



It is clear from history that there has never been a Palestinian nation. Arab empires have waxed and waned, **ruled from Damascus, Baghdad, Riyadh and Cairo**, but never from Jerusalem.

The Queen of Sheba came by camel to prove the wisdom of Solomon and Jesus called her the *“queen of the south”* (Matt. 12:42). Archeological evidence has uncovered a stone wall with the names inscribed on it of all who reigned over the kingdom of Sheba, and there are a number of queens among them. The “dig” was found north-east of the capital of Yemen in the south-west of Arabia. The location is known by the Arabs as Mahram Bilquis, meaning “the Queen of Sheba’s place” (See *Time* magazine 10 September 2001).

We know that the Midianites dwelt along the north-west coast of the Arabian Peninsula, and these were descendants of Abraham through Keturah.

During the seventh and eighth centuries of the Christian era Islam conquered all of the Middle East and drove out the previous inhabitants, so that many of the people of Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, and those who today call themselves Palestinians, are descendants of Abraham and are ethnically Arabs.

Dedan is linked with Sheba and also with Teman, the grandson of Esau, who lived in northern Arabia (Jeremiah 49:7-8). Sheba will finally be blessed during Christ’s millennial kingdom. Isaiah says:

“All they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; they shall show forth the praises of the LORD” (Isa 60:6).

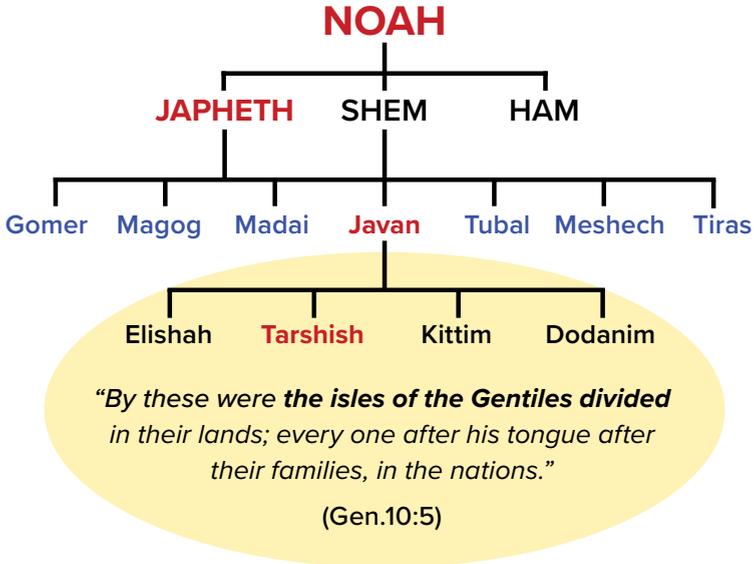
THE MERCHANTS OF TARSHISH AND THE YOUNG LIONS THEREOF

The “*merchants of Tarshish*” and their “*young lions*” are off-shoots of Britain. Herodotus, the Greek historian, wrote that Tarshish lay **beyond the Pillars of Hercules**, which are the large rocks on either side of the Strait of Gibraltar that leads to the Atlantic Ocean.

In Gen. 10:4-5, Tarshish was one of the sons of Javan to whom God gave “*the isles of the Gentiles*” (Gen. 10:4-5). The “*ships of Tarshish*” are referred to at least ten times throughout Scripture (eg. Isa. 2:16; 23:1,14; 60:9; Ezek. 27:25).

About 2,500 years ago Ezekiel wrote concerning the great trading centre of Tyre that she traded in TIN which was brought from Tarshish:

“Tarshish was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of all kinds of riches; with silver, iron, TIN, and lead, they traded in thy fairs” (Ezek. 27:12).



The name Britain is from the Phoenician “Baratanic”, meaning “country of tin”. **Aristotle called it Britannic about 350BC.** The *New Twentieth Century Encyclopedia* indicates that Cornwall was the source of tin in ancient times. Speaking about tin, it confirms,

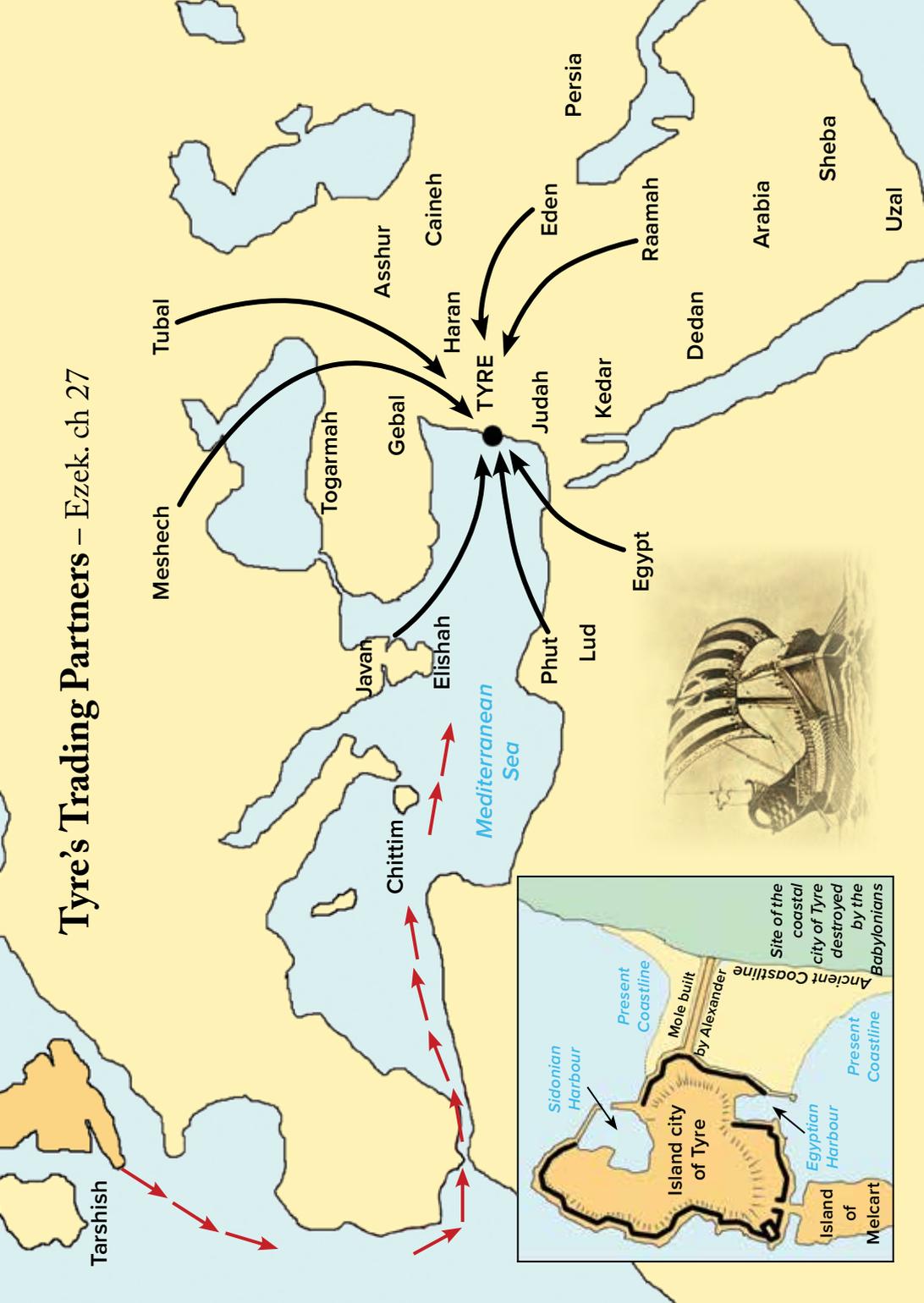
“its use was known in the ancient world and the mines in Cornwall were being worked in the Bronze Age” (Page 1036). Silver, lead, and iron were mined nearby in Wales.

The 19 August 1997 edition of the *Independent International* reported:
 “After a history stretching back at least 2,500 years tin-mining is to end in Cornwall. The last surviving (tin) mine in Britain and Europe announced on Thursday that it will close with the loss of 270 jobs.”

The report also points out that during the nineteenth century Cornwall’s major industry employed “30,000 people, spread through 400 mines”. The “*merchants of Tarshish and the young lions thereof*” are identified with the Anglo-Saxon races and include the United States, a “maritime power” whose land is in “*the isles*” and who currently has defence obligations and commercial interests in the Arabian Peninsula. It is the American fleet that patrols the Persian Gulf protecting Sheba and Dedan!

David’s prayer for his son Solomon, who is prophetic of Christ, links Sheba with Tarshish, and indicates that both will be blessed in the millennial kingdom.

Tyre's Trading Partners – Ezek. ch 27



“The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him” (Ps. 72:10-11).

Is it a mere coincidence that Saudi Arabia, the ancient kingdom of Sheba, is aligned with America, the **young lions** of ancient Tarshish? Is it surprising that the politics of the Middle East has made the Arabian oil sheikhs dependent on the US for protection from their aggressive neighbours?

What hope would the Arabs from Kuwait and along the Persian Gulf to Saudi Arabia have, if America withdrew her military support?

The Bible speaks of the **Merchants** of Tarshish and all oil transactions are done in American dollars although there have been attempts to break away from this system. In 2016 **America no longer needs Arabia’s oil but Arabia needs American protection and America cannot afford to allow the Shiite Iran, to gain possession of the Arabian oil wells.**

A NORTHERN INVASION

Both Ezekiel and Joel refer to a last-days invasion coming from the north.

Joel says,

“I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate” (Joel 2:20).

Ezekiel says,

“Thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts... and I will cause thee to come up from the north parts, and will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel” (Ezek. 38:15; 39; 2).

One of the nations that will join with Russia is described as *“the house of Togarmah of the north quarters”* (Ezek. 38:6), which is the ancient name for tribes that migrated into Asia Minor, or Turkey as we know it. The geographic north from Jerusalem runs along longitude 35. 13E and crosses



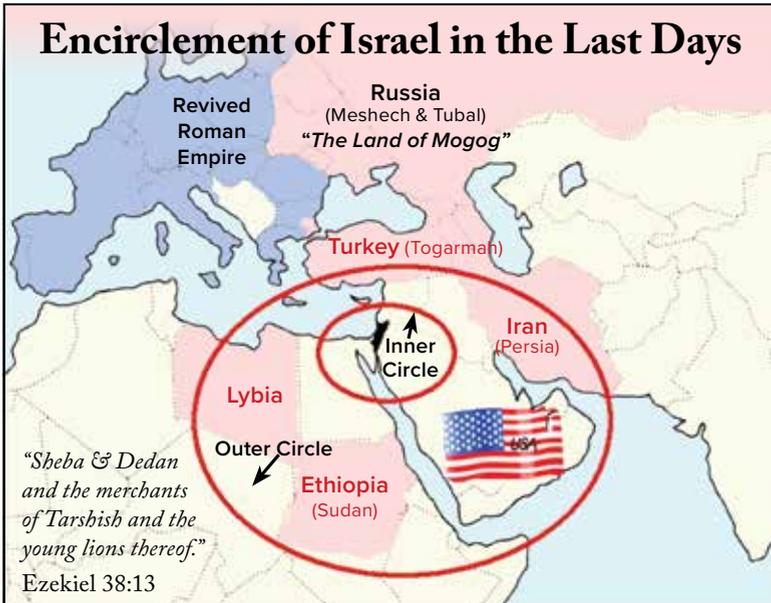
“Thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee” (Ezek. 38:15)

the coastline south of the border of Lebanon, passes through the heart of Turkey, across the Black Sea and through Ukraine and Russia to the Arctic Sea. We shall see that both Ukraine and Turkey are identified as members of this confederacy. Actually the original Hebrew of the text is more specific than our English translation and conveys the thought of “*far north*,” or “*uttermost north*”, which means that the prophecy is not referring to near neighbours Lebanon, Syria, or Iraq, to the immediate north of Israel.

THE ENCIRCLEMENT OF ISRAEL

Today Israel is in an exceedingly vulnerable position. A glance at a map of the Middle East will indicate that Israel is encircled by two rings of hostile nations. The **inner ring** is comprised of Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt, and has a population of 100 million, whereas the **outer ring** consists of Turkey, Iran, Sudan, and Libya, and has a population of 200 million.

Russia is threatening Ukraine and annexed Crimea in March 2015. Ukraine’s eastern provinces are under Russian control and NATO could not defend Ukraine in the event of a Russian invasion. Gas pipelines to Europe run through Ukraine but by 2019 Russia will have new pipelines to the EU under the Baltic and Black Seas. In 2019 when Russian supply contracts with Ukraine expire, Russia can switch off the energy supplies and Ukraine could be forced to surrender.



If Russia, Ukraine and the states of the Caucasus are added to the outer ring, their total rises to 425 million, against Israel's 6.4 million **Jews** (2016). Turkey's military-backed regime supported Israel in 2004 but in 2016 after a coup attempt many thousands of military and police were arrested. Half of Turkey's pilots in the Turkish Airforce were arrested along with top Generals. The Islamic *Justice and Development Party* which won elections in 2004, 2009 and 2014 maintains ties with the terrorist organisation, Muslim Brotherhood.

Turkey broke off relations with Israel in 2010 after a failed attempt to break Israel's blockade on the Hamas terrorist-run Gaza Strip. In 2016 Turkey sought to mend relations with Israel after Israel planned to develop the vast Leviathan Gas Field and Turkey saw that she could be bypassed if she continued her opposition to Israel.

In 2016 we find Russia and Iran in Syria supporting the Assad Government, Iran in Iraq supporting the Shiite Iraqi Government and Hezbollah, which is Iran's defacto army, controlling Lebanon on Israel's northern border.

The Bible indicates that Turkey (Togarmah) will be one of the nations that join with Russia and Iran, Libya and Sudan, to invade Israel.

THE RISE OF ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM 1979

The preparation for the final invasion of Israel by the Russian/Islamic alliance actually began in 1979 with the fall of the Shah of Persia and the rise of Islamic fundamentalism. Under the leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini a new era of revolution commenced, ironically, just one year after Israel signed a Peace Treaty with Egypt (1978).

Since 1979 the world has seen the growth of violent Islamic fundamentalism as it seeks to fulfil a three-point program:

- 1) The overthrow of moderate Islamic governments.
- 2) The destabilisation of Western nations.
- 3) The destruction of the State of Israel.

The "Arab Spring" began in Tunisia in January 2011 with the overthrow of the Government and this has been followed by revolutions in other Arab countries opening the door to terrorists.

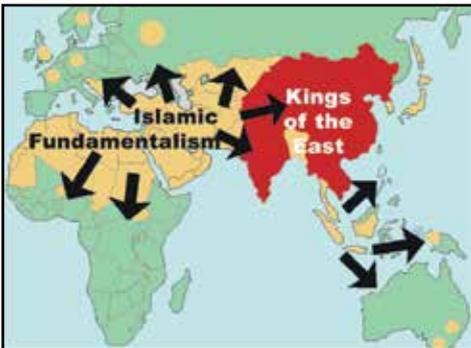
In 2016 there were 1.6 billion Muslims, one fifth of world population, and their influence extends across North Africa down into Sudan, Chad, Niger and into Nigeria. In the east, Indonesia and Malaysia are Muslim, and of course Central Asia and the Middle East. Islam is expanding its influence

into the west of China and there are 20 million Muslims in Russia; 2. 5 million in Moscow. Muslims are migrating into Europe and other Western countries helped by the Syrian refugee crisis. In 2016 there were 3 million in the UK!

In 2016 Islamic terrorism is spreading across western countries and security organisations are seeking to counter it. The war in Syria and the rise of ISIS has made it possible for terrorists to gain entry into western countries as refugees; to establish terror cells, and carry out terrorist acts. There seems little doubt that the **seal judgments (Rev. 6)** at the beginning of the Great Tribulation, after the Church has been raptured, describe Islamic terrorist acts and an Islamic invasion of Israel. The 2nd seal judgment has power to “take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another” on a vast scale yet to be realised (Rev. 6:4). This is what terrorism does; men will live in fear as innocent people are stabbed, shot or blown to pieces by terrorists.

THE DEMISE OF THE SOVIET UNION 1989

In 1917 the Bolshevik Revolution overthrew Tsar Nicholas II, and for 70 years Communism became the scourge of the Free World. After WWII there began a period of confrontation between International Communism headed up by the Soviet Union (USSR) and the Western Powers. In 1961 the Berlin Wall was erected and the threat of a nuclear holocaust hung over the world.



In 1949 the *North Atlantic Treaty Organisation* (NATO) was established to meet the military threat from the USSR, and in 1955 the Soviet Union countered by forming a military alliance of eastern European countries under the *Warsaw Pact*. In order to prevent the spread of Communism into the oil-rich Middle East with its warm-water ports, the

West established a line of defence along the southern border of the USSR. Under the *Bagdad Pact* (1955), and later the *Central Asian Treaty Organisation* (CENTO 1958), Turkey, Iran and Pakistan were armed by the West, denying the USSR access to the Indian Ocean and Middle East oil.

After the fall of the Shah of Persia in 1979 and the rise of militant fundamentalism, the CENTO line of defence along the southern front of

the USSR was broken, but by this time the USSR had problems that led to its disintegration.

The year 1989 saw the most amazing events transpire in eastern Europe. The *Warsaw Pact* nations, one after another, broke away from USSR control, in the following sequence of events:

- i) **April 16 - Poland** lifted the ban on the Solidarity Movement and on **June 5** the Solidarity Movement won an election. On **Aug. 24** a non-Communist Prime Minister was elected.
- ii) **Sept. 11 - Hungary** opened her border with Austria and on 10th **October** the Hungarian Communist Party was dissolved.
- iii) **Oct. 18 - East Germany's** Communist leader resigned followed by the communist cabinet on **Nov. 7**. Two days later the Berlin Wall was torn down.
- iv) **Nov. 10 - Bulgaria's** Communist leader was replaced.
- v) **Nov. 24 - Czechoslovakia's** entire Politburo resigned and the exiled Alexander Dubcek returned.
- vi) **Dec. 22 - Romania's** infamous Nicolae Ceausescu was removed, and executed on Christmas Day.

The following two years saw East and West Germany reunited in 1990, Boris Yeltsin resigned from the Communist Party, the USSR was dissolved along with the Warsaw Pact military alliance and the economic alliance, COMECON, in 1991. Following the disintegration of the USSR, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was formed including all of the former Republics with the exception of Georgia.

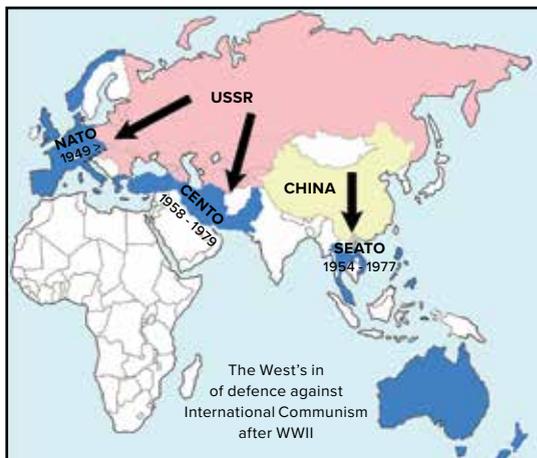
WHY DID THE USSR COLLAPSE?

Communism is atheistic. To be a Communist one must first renounce any belief in God and adopt an anti-God stance. Such an attitude placed the USSR under the judgment of God. The Bible says:

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God..." (Ps. 14:1).

If nations want the blessing of God on their economy and industry, they had better seek after the Lord.

By 1990 Russia's economy was in tatters and the nation imploded. Many workers waited months for their pay. But there is another reason for the demise of the USSR. The nation of Israel is returning to the land which God gave to Abraham and his seed for an everlasting possession and several million Jews



were locked behind the “iron curtain”. God said to Israel: *“I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far”* (Isa. 43:5-6).

In the decade following the collapse of the Soviet Union almost one million Jews returned to Israel from the Soviet Union countries.

RUSSIA IS HOOKED!

In Ezekiel 38:4 God says to Gog the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal, *“I will turn thee back, and put **hooks into thy jaws**, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army...”*

Like a fish caught with a hook in its jaws so God would force Russia into an alliance with Persia (Iran), Ethiopia (Sudan), Libya and Turkey (the house of Togarmah), in order to judge them on the mountains of Israel. Russia is being compelled by force of circumstances to align itself with Iran and the other Muslim nations against Israel.

On Russia’s southern border the Muslim nations from Pakistan to Sudan provide a developing market of more than 400 million, in addition to the 200 million in the eleven CIS countries. Russia’s economic future is geographically tied to Muslim nations that, with her, share much of the world’s oil and natural gas resources.

In 2016 all of the old Warsaw Pact nations are aligned with the EU/NATO group of nations but Russia finds the door to the Muslim world opening. In the Middle East, Israel is supported by America and is now an Associate-Member of the EU, so it is logical that Russia’s foreign policy should be pro-Arab; pro-Muslim.

The war in Syria has given Russia the opportunity she has longed for to position herself in the Middle East. In 2016 she has a permanent naval base at Tartus on the coast of Syria and an air base at Latakia. She can now station her navy in the Mediterranean.

Furthermore, Iran has troops in Iraq and Syria on Israel's border and Hezbollah in Lebanon is Iran's defacto army. Russia and her Islamic allies are being positioned for the invasion of Israel!

PREPARE!

The preparation for this final battle between Islam and Israel is the responsibility of Russia by Divine command. God says to Gog:

*"Be thou prepared, and prepare for thyself, thou, and all thy company that are assembled unto thee, and **be thou a guard** unto them"* (Ezek. 38:7).

As we look at the capability of the nations involved in the Middle East wars there is no doubt that Israel has the technological edge on the Muslim nations. Although only 6.4 million **Jews** (2016) live in the land, they have nuclear warheads, satellite surveillance, sophisticated laser weapons and guidance systems, and an airforce that is the envy of every other airforce in the world. Their defence industry is manufacturing and selling weapons to the rest of the world in competition with the United States, Europe and Russia!



It only stands to reason therefore, that if the Muslim nations plan, as they say they do, to attack Israel, they are going to need modern weapons that match the Israeli arsenal. They know that without outside technical assistance the chance of success over Israel is minuscule, and they have already turned to Russia to prepare them for the coming battle.

Russian S-400 missiles with their sophisticated radar guidance system are now installed in Syria. This radar system has a range that can monitor all aircraft and missile movements from Turkey to Egypt. Britain's largest overseas base is at RAF Akrotin on Cyprus.

One report read:

"Britain and the United States fear Moscow will be able to collect information that is highly valuable to Russia's Middle East allies: Syria, Iraq, and perhaps Iran."

When Russia moves on Israel she will need to have her guidance systems in place in order to use modern weaponry and the war in Syria has given her the opportunity to establish these.

In addition, Russia assisted Iran to build a nuclear power plant worth \$1 billion at Bushehr in the Persian Gulf, and in 2016 signed contracts to build

two more plants. Russia has also supplied Iran with the S-300 advanced anti-aircraft missiles.

Intelligence reports indicate that Russia has struck an agreement to assist Iran in the development of weapons on condition that the Islamic revolution is not taken within her borders. Other reports indicate that Iran has already acquired a number of nuclear warheads from intercontinental ballistic missile sites in Kazakhstan following the break-up of the USSR.

As far back as 1997, Iran engaged in war games involving 200,000 troops which were moved a distance equal to the distance from Iran to Israel. The code name of the exercise was "Road to Jerusalem!"

Within Russia there is a growing nationalistic movement that has a strong anti-Semitic policy. Public statements have been made by its leaders blaming all of Russia's woes on the Jews. Russia is hooked!

TURKEY'S FUTURE

One of the nations that join with Russia in the Russian/Islamic alliance against Israel is the "*house of Togarmah of the north quarters*". Ancient records indicate that the descendants of Togarmah settled in eastern Turkey or Armenia after the Flood and spread across Asia Minor, or Turkey as we know it. Armenia as we know it today is only eastern Armenia, since western Armenia has been absorbed into eastern Turkey after the Turks force-marched 1.7 million Armenians to Syria in an act of genocide in 1915-16. A total of 750,000 people died by starvation or Turkish bullets.

Since World War II Turkey has been a member of NATO, and has the largest army in the Middle East but under the Islamic *Justice and Development Party* has begun to align with Russia and since sanctions on Iran were removed in 2016, has formed an economic relationship with Iran. Iran is Shiite and Turkey is Sunni Muslim but it seems they have similar regional goals; both are involved in the Syrian conflict.

Turkey's population is 95% Muslim and has been ruled by a secular government installed by the military since 1924. In past elections the *Islamist Welfare Party* gained power and ruled in coalition until the army declared it illegal. New elections were called and the *Virtue Party* gained government, but it too was declared illegal. In 2003 the *Justice and Development Party* won power in its own right, and needed only four more seats to gain a two-thirds majority which would empower it to change the constitution. It has won two elections since.

Turkey's military has had treaty arrangements with Israel, and Israel has completed military contracts for Turkey. However Islamic leaders cancelled these military contracts.

In 2016, Islamists have power in Turkey, and since the attempted coup, have arrested half of their airforce pilots, thousands of police and military personnel including many military leaders.

Turkey's chances of joining the EU are minuscule as *The Guardian Weekly 12 July 1998* reported after one attempt by Turkey to join the European Community (EU) failed. Turkey described her rejection

“as a disgrace, a slap in the face, prejudice, a blunder, and discriminatory... The real reason why they are being kept out, say the Turks, is that Europe sees itself above all as a ‘Christian club’ and feels threatened by a possible influx of (Muslim) immigrants from Anatolia.”

In Section 3 we pointed out that the EU was a revival of the old Roman Empire and was being ridden to power by the “*harlot woman*” (apostate Christendom at Rome) and continued rejection of Turkey by the EU on the grounds that she is Muslim, will play into the hands of the Islamic fundamentalist movement. In 2015/16, since the refugees from Syria have crossed into EU countries from Turkey, the EU has experienced an increase in Islamic terrorism and the barriers to EU membership have been raised even higher.

In 2016, in spite of an incident when a Turkish fighter plane shot down a Russian plane, Russia began building a nuclear power plant at Akkuyu on Turkey's south coast and has completed construction of a second gas pipeline to Turkey under the Black Sea known as *TurkStream*. There is no doubt that the Islamist Government in Turkey is moving closer to Russia economically and politically and since sanctions against Iran have been lifted, Turkey has increased trade with Iran.

THE DESTRUCTION OF GOG'S ARMY

When faced with such overwhelming odds, and challenged by 144,000 Jewish preachers early in the 7-year Great Tribulation (Rev. 7), Israel will at last repent and acknowledge Jesus Christ as Messiah and Lord. God will then respond with devastating judgments against the invading armies, which will be destroyed in four ways:

1. Earthquakes

“Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel... the

mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground” (Ezek. 38:19-20).

It is interesting that seismic engineers in 2004 predicted a strong earthquake in Israel that will affect Jerusalem, Haifa, and Tel-Aviv. Several shocks around 5 on the Richter scale have occurred, but seismologists believe it is only a matter of time before the big one strikes. However, this earthquake will be **global** and devastate the invading armies. It is described in Rev. 6:12-17.

2. *Disunity*

“And I will call for a sword against him...every man’s sword shall be against his brother” (Ezek. 38:21).

This is reminiscent of the time when King Jehoshaphat was attacked by a confederacy of the Ammonites, Moabites and Edomites. We read that the King

“set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah” (2 Chron. 20:3).

The prophet Jahaziel then told Jehoshaphat,

“Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord” (2 Chron. 20:17).

Judah then went to the battle singing praises to the Lord, and

*“when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir... and they were smitten... **every one helped to destroy another**. And when Judah came... behold, they were dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none escaped” (2 Chron. 20:22-24).*

Likewise, Israel will heed the words of Joel 2:12-20 and “sanctify a fast”. The priests will

“weep between the porch and the altar,” and say, “Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?”

God will respond in fearful judgment on the nations that come against Israel, and “every man’s sword shall be against his brother!” Iranian, Turk, Russian, Sudanese, Libyan, and all the other people with them, will turn on each other as Israel acknowledges Jesus Christ as Messiah and Lord! The result - only **one sixth** of the invaders survive! (Ezek. 39:2).

3. *Disease*

“And I will plead against him with pestilence” (disease) (Ezek. 38:22).

We recall that in the days of King Hezekiah, the Assyrian army captured all the land of Judah and only Jerusalem remained. Rabshakeh, the “*chief butler*” of Sennacherib, mocked the God of Israel, and when Hezekiah humbled himself before the Lord, God responded and in one night 185,000 Assyrian soldiers perished in their tents (2 Kings 19:35). How the angel of the Lord did this we are not told, but we do know that in this last-days battle disease will be used by God. Biological weapons may be used since germ warfare was used by Saddam Hussein against the Kurds and could be used again in the Tribulation.

4. *Hailstones*

“And I will rain upon him, and upon his bands...an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone” (Ezek. 38:22).

So great will be this destruction that only one sixth of the armies will escape (Ezek 39:2), and Joel tells us they will be removed

*“far off... into a land barren and desolate, with his face toward **the east sea**, and his hinder part toward the **utmost sea**”* (Joel 2:20).

Perhaps this indicates that the remnants of the great army will retreat to Siberia (Joel 2:20), where Russia has banished its prisoners for decades. The location is “*far off*”, and the east sea could only be the Pacific Ocean. The utmost sea would have to be the Arctic Sea in the utmost north.

GOG’S BURIAL

Joel wrote:

“His stink shall come up, and his ill savour shall come up, because he hath done great things” (Joel 2:20).

Ezekiel described the aftermath of this conflict:

*“In that day, I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Israel, the valley of the passengers (travellers) **on the east of the sea**: and it shall **stop the noses** of the passengers...And **seven months** shall the house of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land”* (Ezek. 39:11-12).

A valley on the east of the Dead Sea, in the land of Jordan, will be used to bury the hundreds of thousands of corpses. It will be called “*Hamon-gog*”, ie. *Gog’s Multitude* (Ezek. 39:11), and it will be seven months before the land is cleansed. The amount of debris left by the retreating armies will be so vast that it will take 7 years to burn. (Ezek. 39:9). No doubt the Jews will be able to utilise much of the armaments left behind to defend themselves against Antichrist in the second half of the Tribulation.



A FIRE ON MAGOG AND THE ISLES

Not only will the army of Gog receive judgment from the Lord at this time, but we read that **Gog's country, the land of Magog**, will be burned so that the possibility of another attack will be eliminated.

"And I will send a fire on Magog and on them that dwell carelessly in the isles: and they shall know that I am the Lord"(Ezek. 39:6).

Professor Lance Endersbee, Dean of Engineering at Monash University has written in his book, *A Voyage of Discovery*, concerning the Black Sea; he states that there are 100 mud volcanoes beneath it and these are pouring methane gas into the waters. The methane gas is soluble and at the bottom of the sea has saturated the waters so that fish survive only near the surface. Should the methane solution reach the surface where it is no longer under pressure, it will be released into the atmosphere as a gas. Even at the present time, the gas ignites after a lightning strike. At the floor of the sea the water is undisturbed but should the water be disturbed and come to the surface, large amounts of methane gas would be released. **The EU has a team of scientists monitoring the situation.** If a massive earthquake should disturb these saturated waters there could be a disastrous fire.

Scripture states that at the time of the Russian/Islamic invasion of Israel there will be a global earthquake “so that *the fishes of the sea*...and all the men that are upon the face of the earth shall shake at my presence” (Ezek. 38:20). If a southerly wind is blowing the gas would spread over the land of Russia.

The statement that the fire would also burn, “*them that dwell carelessly in the isles*”, suggests that the sons of Javan, to whom were given the “*isles of the sea*”, are in view. We have already seen that Tarshish was one of the sons of Javan (Gen10:4), and that it is “*the merchants of Tarshish and all the young lions thereof*” who, together with Sheba and Dedan, challenge the Russian/Islamic invasion.

It may be that America and/or Britain will be incapacitated for any major military role at the same time as Russia is burned with fire. Perhaps a shoot-out between Russia and America, or it could be Divine judgment similar to that experienced by Sodom and Gomorrah. *Jane's Intelligence Digest* has suggested that Islamic terrorists are planning to use weapons of mass destruction on American cities in the event that America assists Israel when Iran finally invades. In September 2004 a report indicated that 15 sensitive targets had already been identified in the US.

Time will tell, but the Christians won't be here to witness these events which occur in the Tribulation **after the Church has been raptured.**

GOD'S PURPOSE FOR ISRAEL

The outcome of the events described is that the nation of Israel will repent and “*keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ*” (Rev. 12:17). We read,

*“So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God **FROM THAT DAY AND FORWARD.** And the heathen (Gentiles) shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me, therefore hid I my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies ... **Neither will I hide my face any more from them:** for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD”* (Ezek. 39:22-29).

If the Russian invasion and conversion of Israel happened **before** the Rapture the whole nation would become members of the Body of Christ, the Church, and would be removed at the Rapture. They would not then be on earth during the Tribulation to greet their Messiah when He returns to earth. Scripture states that ALL Israel will be saved **after** the fulness of the Gentile Church is come in:

*“Blindness in part is happened to Israel, **UNTIL** the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so **ALL Israel shall be saved**” (Rom. 11:25-26).*

In any case, Joel 2:1,11 plainly states that this northern invasion will occur in the “*day of the Lord*”. There has to be a saved nation of Israel here to greet their Messiah when He comes to the Mount of Olives.

“They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn” (Zech. 12:10-14).

When the sons of Israel stood before Joseph, they admitted they were in great distress because of what they had done in selling him into slavery over 20 years before. They said,

*“We are verily guilty concerning our brother (Joseph), in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, **and we would not hear**; therefore is this distress come upon us” (Gen. 42:21).*

Likewise, the day will come when the children of Israel will acknowledge that they are in great distress because they rejected God’s only begotten Son nearly 2,000 years ago, and nailed Him to a cross, refusing to hear Him!

Just as the children of Israel were then blessed under the reign of Joseph, so, during the reign of Jesus Christ, Israel will be exalted and become the head of the nations. All of Israel’s present efforts to re-establish in the land will utterly fail until they bow at Jesus’ pierced feet. Then, as with Joseph,

*“the fame thereof was heard in Pharaoh’s house, saying, **Joseph’s brethren are come!**” (Gen. 45:16).*

The world will only understand the mystery of Israel’s 2,000 years of persecution and dispersion when they see God’s reponse to a truly repentant nation. It will take the Russian/Islamic invasion to bring it to pass! Ezekiel wrote:

*“And **the heathen shall know** that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me, therefore hid I my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies: so fell they all by the sword” (Ezek. 39:23).*

In 2016 Russia, Turkey and Iran are on Israel’s border and in control of Syria, Iranian militias are fighting in Iraq and the Iranian Hezbollah forces control Lebanon. The Russian/Islamic alliance is being strengthened daily and this indicates that Christ is coming soon! However, the seven years of Tribulation cannot begin until the born-again believers in the Lord Jesus have been removed at the Rapture. The Rapture is the next item on the prophetic agenda.

Section 5

Signs of the Last Days

Jesus said:

*“There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars;
and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and
the waves roaring; men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking
after those things which are coming on the earth”*

(Luke 21:25-26).



The Rapture of the Church before Israel's 70th week begins

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS IN THE TRIBULATION

7 Seals and 6 Trumpet Judgments

Antichrist makes 7-year covenant (Dan. 9:24) and the land divided (Dan. 11:39).

Two Jewish witnesses and 144,000 turn to Christ. Temple built and sacrifices commence

Egypt invades & Antichrist repels attack (Dan. 11:40-43)

144,000 sealed for protection to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom (Rev. 7:1-4; Matt. 24:14)

Russia, Iran, Turkey, Libya & Sudan invade Israel (Ezek. 38 & 39)

Russian/Islamic invasion causes Israel to turn to Christ (Ezek. 39:22; Joel 2:18-19)

God destroys the invaders (Ezek. 39:1-5)

Israel bury the dead for 7 months (Ezek. 39:12)

Antichrist breaks his covenant and plants his palace in the Holy Mount (Temple) - becomes demon possessed & sets up idol in the Temple.

Two witnesses and 144,000 slain by the Beast. Jews flee into the mountains for 1,260 days. The everlasting Gospel preached by an angel.

Men receive the mark of the Beast. Judgments directed against the Beast, his kingdom and his followers (Rev. 16)

The Lord fights for Israel and protects them in a wilderness place borne by two wings of a great eagle (USA?) (Rev. 12:14; Zech. 12:1-14)

Mystery Babylon (apostate Christendom) burned (Rev. 18) The Beast gathers all nations to fight against Christ at Armageddon - the Beast and followers cast into lake of fire.

Christ returns with His saints to deliver His people from the Beast and Israel welcomes her King expressing great sorrow for the years of rejection.

3rd WOE = 7 Vial Judgments

1,260 Days = 42 months

1,260 Days = 42 months

ISLAMIC terrorism and invasion

Israel Protected from the Beast

SATAN BOUND IN THE BOTTOMLESS PIT

1,000 Year reign of Christ on Earth

WHY DO WE NEED SIGNS OF THE LAST DAYS?

THUS far in our series we have considered prophecies relating to the Seven Dispensations, Israel's "70 Weeks", the Revived Roman Empire, and the Russian/Muslim Alliance. In this study we look at a range of predictions which indicate that we are in the last days and fast approaching the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The 20th century has brought an explosion of knowledge and travel that has transformed society, yet Daniel, about 536 BC, spoke of *"the time of the end"* when *"many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased"* (Dan12:4).

Increased knowledge and travel, however, are only two of many signs that can be identified as sure indicators of the latter times. If we could only point to isolated prophecies, then we might have serious doubts about the imminent return of our Lord, but it matters not whether we look at the political, economic, military, social or religious arenas, all cry out with one voice, The coming of the Lord is at hand!

Even ungodly people, who never seriously read the Word of God, are aware that events overtaking the world dictate that sooner rather than later something major has to happen. History is obviously moving toward an inescapable terminus point, and many in society are dropping out as the landmarks of past generations disappear. Unemployment, the widening gap between rich and poor, threats of violence, revolution, and religious fanaticism, create such fear in the minds of the younger generation that many are escaping to the self-destructive oblivion of drugs.

In the midst of such insecurity, the Bible offers a message of hope. God is still in the business of saving souls and changing lives. When a man or a woman comes to the end of their tether and turns to Jesus Christ in true repentance and faith, the miracle of regeneration takes place, and immediately God begins to reveal His perfect plan. Instead of chaos, there comes order and purpose for living. Where guilt haunted the soul, there is the balm of God's forgiveness. The past is blotted out forever, and a new life begins which continues beyond the grave into an eternal blessedness that defies human understanding. Instead of depression God gives hope and real joy.

The purpose of this section of the book is to awaken many to the lateness of the hour, and to urge sinners to seek the only possible refuge in a Saviour who died for our sins, rose for our justification, reigns in heaven, and who is

coming again for those who know and love Him. We commend its message to the reader.

The 20th century has seen more changes than any previous century in the whole 6,000 years of human history. There have been more advances in scientific knowledge, more growth in world population, more warfare, and more travel than could have been imagined in man's wildest dreams just 100 years ago. All the dramatic changes which have occurred were predicted in the Bible over 2,000 years ago as signs of the last days.

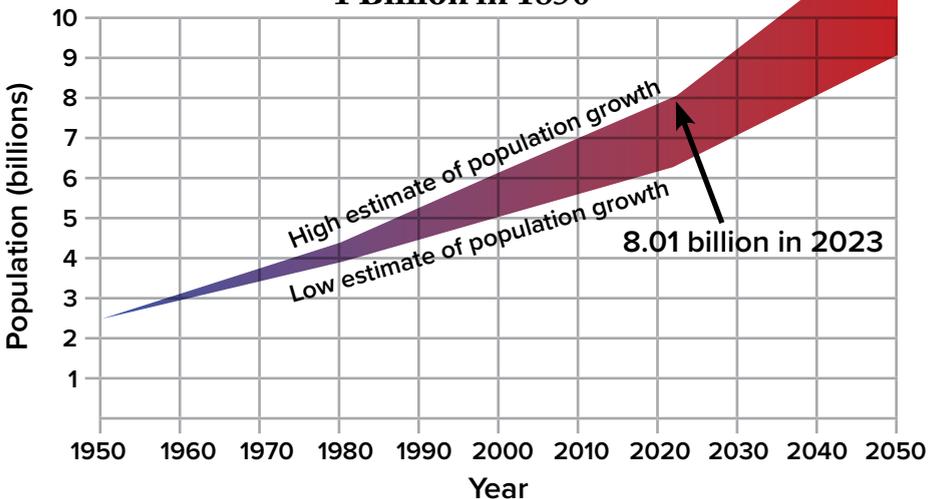
THE SIGN OF A POPULATION EXPLOSION

It is estimated that world population in 1850 was 1 billion, yet in the last 179 years to 2019 it has increased to 7.7 billion and is forecast by the United Nations to reach between 10 and 12 billion soon after 2050!

By the year 2045 China, even with its "one child" family policy, is expected to increase to 1.6 billion, and there will be more Indians than Chinese! The Indian population alone will increase by more than twice the current population of the United States!

The social implications of birth control policies are however horrific. Women are having abortions if tests indicate the unborn babe is a girl, and statistics show that an imbalance is being created. This will result in serious destabilising pressures on human relationships.

World Population: 1950 to 2050 **1 Billion in 1850**



In addition, food production will have to more than double at a time when famines, pestilence, and war, are disrupting agricultural production.

In developing countries much of the best agricultural land is being absorbed by massive urban expansion. Unemployed rural workers flock to the cities and new residential and factory complexes replace vegetable gardens.

In the early 1990s it was estimated that there were 120 million unemployed rural workers in China, and 80 million of these had moved to the cities to seek work in the construction industry. The number of unemployed is expected to continue to rise as China modernises its industries.

Developing countries face incredible labour problems as their industries modernise. Sooner or later wages will increase, and in order to compete on world markets machines will replace people. This trend is already apparent in Asian countries and is contributing to massive unemployment.

Between 1990 and 2000, Indonesia's population grew by more than the population of Australia - by 20 million! Indonesia's population in the year 2016 was 261 million and rising at 1. 17% annually.

In countries such as Indonesia, where land is in short supply, the population explosion could lead to expansionist policies similar to that which occurred in Timor and West Irian.

The *1995 CIA World Fact Book* indicated that the world Population Growth Rate in that year was 1. 5%, and Life Expectancy 62 years. The growth rate has slowed but longevity has increased and world population in 2016 was 7. 4 billion.

The Bible says that a population explosion is one of the signs of the last days when Jesus Christ will come again. Jesus said,

*“As it was in **the days of Noah**, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all”* (Luke 17:26-27).

The days of Noah were characterised by a population explosion, and the Book of Genesis records that

*“Men began to **multiply** on the face of the earth... and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually... and the earth was filled with violence”* (Gen. 6:1-12).

One result of the population explosion is a drift to the cities. The percentage of people moving to the cities has been increasing since the 19th century.

Huge building projects are proceeding all over the world and some cities have populations approaching that of Australia! The Greater City of Tokyo is nearly double the population of Australia with more than 37.8 million. Jesus said,

*“Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, **they builded**; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. **Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed**”*
(Luke17:28-30).

THE SIGN OF THE KINGS OF THE EAST

It is interesting to note that the Bible speaks of an army of 200 million that will slay one third of world population in the Tribulation. India, China, Pakiatan and North Korea all have nuclear weapons and can destroy vast areas. Such a huge army would have been impossible 100 years ago, but today it has become a distinct possibility. Add the populations of Asian countries and you have a staggering 3.9 billion people in 2016 or 52.7% of world population!

If average population growth was at 1.5% per annum there will be an extra billion people on the earth in the next decade, and half of these will be in the developing countries of Asia.

When China suffered defeat in the war against North Vietnam in 1979, it realised that modern weapons were needed and so it opened the door to Western technology. It was stated at that time that China would have to retrain its entire Militia in the use of modern weapons. This would involve everyone over 25 years; the number quoted was 200 million!

The facts concerning the current population explosion support the statements of Scripture about the rise of the kings of the east in the last days. These will also play a major role in the battle of Armageddon, which occurs at the time of Christ's second coming.

THE SIGN OF EUPHRATES DRYING UP

At the battle of Armageddon all nations will be involved, but specific mention is made of the “*kings of the east*”. We read,

*“And the sixth angel poured out his vial (bowl) upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that **the way of the kings of the east** might be prepared.*

And I saw three unclean spirits...of devils, working miracles, which go forth

unto the kings... of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty... and he gathered them together into a place called Armageddon” (Rev. 16:12-16).

In Rev 9:13-21 we have details of the sixth trumpet judgment in the first half of the Great Tribulation period. It too refers to the River Euphrates and to the mobilisation of an army of 200 million which will destroy one third of mankind. This army is prepared for a specific time:

“for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men” (Rev. 9:15).

To mobilise such a massive army and to move it across Central Asia to Israel for the battle of Armageddon will be an amazing feat. The exercise will take considerable time, and no doubt will involve aeroplanes, ships and ground troops. The ground forces will need to cross the River Euphrates, and Scripture says that its waters will be dried up to allow the huge army to cross (Rev. 16:12). Turkey has built dams on the Euphrates and Tigris rivers that can shut down the flow of water to those rivers.

A great deal of attention is being given by the World Tourist Organisation (WTO) to opening up of the Old Silk Road, which was a maze of roads used as the major link between Asia and the Middle East in ancient times. It ran from Xian, in central China, to the Mediterranean, as shown on the following map. Rail connections have already been established, and there are plans to construct a natural gas line from central Asia to China along this corridor. Fast-train technology, coupled with the desire to provide access to land-locked developing countries in central Asia, makes the proposal attractive.

A glance at the map will show that the path to the Middle East along the Silk Road located south of the Caspian Sea must cross the Euphrates River, which, the Bible says, will be dried up to allow Asian armies to pass.

The Euphrates and Tigris Rivers rise in the very high country of eastern Turkey around Ararat and flow to the lowlands of Syria and Iraq, finally pouring into the Persian Gulf.

Already Turkey has harnessed the waters of the Euphrates and Tigris and has used the Euphrates as a political weapon against Syria by stopping the flow for a period of four days. A report by *Intelligence Digest* 3 May 1996, reads as follows:

“Last week we warned that Syria was likely to respond by increasing

support for Kurdish anti-Turkish terrorism, and that Turkey in turn would likely respond by using the water weapon. No sooner was the ink dry on the paper than news came in that Turkey had done precisely that - reduced the supply of water flowing down the Euphrates to Syria. Turkey announced that it was to cut the flow of water for four days... for technical reasons.”

(*Intelligence Digest* is available from The Stoneyhill Centre, Brimpsfield, Gloucester, GL4 8LF, UK.)



However, Turkey has much grander plans for the waters of the Euphrates and the Tigris.

In 1996 Turkey announced a US\$32 billion scheme to build dams, hydroelectric power plants, and irrigation schemes along the Euphrates, and on 1 October 1997 the Turkish State Hydraulic Works (DSI) announced details of how this massive scheme would be implemented.

This development demonstrates how Turkey can influence much of the Middle East through the control of water supplies.

Turkey had 79 million people in 2016 and has a powerful military force which neither Syria nor Iraq would dare to challenge. The report on Turkey’s plans for the Euphrates is described in *New Europe* 11 October 1997, and in

view of the great significance of this development we print a substantial part of the following newspaper article.

“Turkey is planning a series of water projects stretching from Istanbul to its impoverished south-east in a bid to meet growing water and energy demands,..The country’s State Hydraulic Works (DSI) unveiled details of a dam project worth US\$1billion near Turkey’s border with Syria and Iraq. Plans for a pipeline to carry water to Istanbul and a project to ship water from Turkey’s southern shores to northern Cyprus were also in the offing...The dam is being negotiated by Sulzer, and the Union Bank of Switzerland is financing it.”

Negotiations on the scheme to build a dam and a 1200mw (megawatt) hydroelectric power plant in Ilisu were scheduled for the first half of 1998. This dam, will be the largest on the Tigris River and is a part of the US\$32 billion energy and irrigation project centred on the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers within south-east Turkey.

The South-East Anatolia Project (GAP) consists of a planned network of 22 dams and 19 power plants, with a capacity of 7,476 mw (megawatts).

The huge project has upset downstream neighbours Iraq and Syria, who fear that Turkey will be able to turn off their water supplies in times of strife. The implications of Turkey’s grand water plan are mind-boggling to say the least, and illustrate how easily the Scripture could be fulfilled and the River Euphrates be dried up during the Great Tribulation, “*that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared*” (Rev 16:12). It’s only a matter of turning off the tap!

THE SIGN OF THE NILE RIVER DRYING UP

Not only does Scripture indicate that the Euphrates River will be dried up in the last days, but it also states that the River Nile, the longest river in the world, will be so dry that men will walk across its bed dry-shod; without removing their shoes.

The Nile rises in the mountainous regions of Ethiopia where the Blue Nile contributes 85% of the water. *Islamic Affairs Analyst* September 1996, reported on Ethiopia’s plans to build dams for large hydroelectric and irrigation schemes, and to use water as a political weapon against Egypt.

Egypt is already in desperate straits as indicated in the *ABC Lateline* program on 14 October 1997. The Nile is polluted, and the agriculture and fishing industries are drastically reduced as a direct result of the construction of the Aswan Dam.

Islamic Affairs Analyst 2 Sept. 1996 gave the following report:

“Ethiopia’s ruler, Meles Zenawi, has developed a plan for controlling the headwaters of the Nile that will give Ethiopia the same power over Egypt as Turkey now holds over Syria and Iraq through that country’s control of the headwaters of the Euphrates.

First, he wishes to develop Ethiopia’s economy to the maximum of its potential. To do this he hopes to build dams and reservoirs on the Nile that will eventually generate 20 million kilowatt/hours of electricity, four times the output of Egypt’s Aswan Dam. The same projects will significantly increase Ethiopia’s area of cultivatable land and its water storage capabilities.

Zenawi’s second motive related to Egypt. He believes that Egypt will by no means remain a stable regional power enjoying a close relationship with the United States.

Egypt currently obtains 55.5 billion cubic metres of water a year from the Nile, 85% of which comes from the Blue Nile which rises in Ethiopia, to meet the total annual water consumption of 58.5 billion cu. meters. So Zenawi believes that Ethiopia can best protect itself from bullying by developing control over a good part of Egypt’s water supply.”

²(*Islamic Affairs Analyst* available from *Intelligence International Ltd*, The Stoneyhill Centre, Brimpsfield, Gloucester, GL4 8LF, UK.)

Isaiah the prophet wrote of the days when God would “assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth” (Isa 11:12). This, of course, has begun with the return of Jews to the land after nearly 2,000 years of dispersion, and Isaiah goes on to say:

“And the LORD shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, AND MAKE MEN GO OVER DRYSHOD” (Isa. 11:15).

The word “dryshod” is literally “in shoes”, which indicates that it will not be necessary to remove one’s shoes to walk across the dry riverbed!



Could the Nile dry up? For several years archaeologists excavated below the water-level in Alexandria's harbour for the palace of Cleopatra and the giant lighthouse which was one of the Seven Wonders of the World. All of these treasures now rest 20 feet below the surface of the water as the result of an earthquake.

If the land formation has sunk to such an extent in the past, there is no reason why it could not change again - sufficient to prevent the sea flowing inland! The incidence of major earthquakes has been steadily increasing since late last century, and the Bible foretells massive earthquakes in the Middle East in the last days (Zech. 14:4-5; Ezek. 38:19-20; Rev. 11:13). The current damming of the River Nile is another sign that we must be in the last days!

GLOBAL EVENTS

Just two days before Jesus died on the cross, His disciples showed Him the massive stones of Herod's Temple and Jesus told them that all of these would be thrown down. Later, on the Mount of Olives, the disciples asked, "*When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world (age)?*" Jesus indicated that there would be a number of **universal events** that would characterise the last days immediately preceding His coming again.

First, the Lord said that there would always be "*wars and rumours of wars*", but they were not to be troubled by them. "*All these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet*" (Matt. 24:6).

However, when a **global situation occurred**, then they were to take note, for all these would be the "*beginning of sorrows*", or "*travail pains*", which would herald the new world order over which Jesus Christ will rule as King of kings.

The travail pains are described: "*nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom ... famines, and pestilences (diseases) and earthquakes, in divers places*" (Matt. 24:7). This is called the "**Great Tribulation**", when Antichrist will set up his idol image in the rebuilt Temple at Jerusalem. Immediately after the Tribulation, Jesus will come to reign (Matt. 24:29).

THE SIGN OF GLOBAL WARFARE

Patrick Brogan, in his heavily documented 653-page book entitled "*World Conflicts, Why and Where they are Happening*", lists at least 97 wars between 1945 and 1992, which claimed the lives of somewhere between 15 and 30 million people.

This followed two World Wars and in WWI (1914-18) 8. 5 to 10 million died in action, but in WWII (1939-45) the figure was 24 million plus 40 million civilians, according to an *“Almanac of Historical Facts”* by Robert Stewart Ph.D. Of the 9 million Jews in Europe before WWII, only 3 million survived.

Pol Pot’s decimation of Cambodia wiped out about one third of its 8. 6 million people (3 million), and achieved total dislocation of the entire population. The Korean War claimed 2,884,000 lives including 2 million civilians, and the subsequent famine in North Korea claimed 2. 5 million between 1996-98. Stalin’s suppression of Ukraine left 14 million murdered.

The number of refugees, however, far exceeded the number of deaths. In Afghanistan for instance, between 1979 and 1989, the US Government states that out of a population of 15. 5 million there were 1 million killed, but the number of refugees was 7. 6 million. - 50% of the population!

The Bible says that one of the signs of the last days would be global warfare on an unprecedented scale that will lead to the Great Tribulation. We read, *“For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom...For **then** shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be”* (Matt. 24:6-21).

The Iran/Iraq War (1980-88) claimed 1 million lives with many more casualties, and what shall we say about the Arab/Israeli wars, the Gulf War, and the Falklands War. We could talk about the India/China War, the India/Pakistan War, the Vietnam War which left 2. 5 million dead, and the China/Vietnam War which left 40,000 dead before the Chinese withdrew.

The attempted Communist take-over of Indonesia in 1965 left 500,000 dead, and the civil war in Algeria (1991-99) has left nearly 100,000 dead. Four secessionist wars and famines killed up to 2 million in Ethiopia between 1972 and 1991. Bosnia, Hungary, the Kurds, Chechnya, Armenia, Malaysia, Philippines, Timor, Angola, Yemen, Congo, Chad, Sudan, Russia, Tibet, Burma, Laos, China etc have experienced bloody revolution or war.

Between 1945 and 1991 Patrick Brogan lists 97 wars, 253 coups and revolutions, and 199 attempted significant assassinations, of which only 12 failed. He concludes, **“It is fruitless to predict where the next calamities will arise.”** The sign of warfare is unmistakably clear and will become global warfare after the Rapture.

Official records show that between 1992 and 2016 more than four million

have perished in wars of various kinds and the killing continues but it is not yet global warfare such as will occur in the Tribulation when human life will be in danger of extinction. Military expenditure is increasing as nations prepare for that time.

Military Expenditure in 2019 for the Top 10 Nations

(In billions of dollars)

US	717.0
China	177.0
India.....	61.0
Germany	53.0
Saudi Arabia.....	51.0
United Kingdom	49.0
France.....	48.0
Japan.....	47.0
Russia	46.4
South Korea	42.0
Total (10 nations)	\$1,291.4 billion (\$1.29 trillion)

As we look at the table above, we are reminded of Joel's prophecy concerning the last great battle before Christ returns:

*“Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; **Prepare war**, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up. **Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong...**”*
(Joel 3:9-10).

THE SIGN OF GLOBAL FAMINE

Immediately following the Lord's statement that global warfare would precede His second coming, He said,

*“There shall be **famines**, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places”*
(Matt. 24:7).

In 2016 the World Food Program estimated 795 million people in the world do not have enough food to lead a healthy active life.

International Needs Australia estimate that poor nutrition causes nearly half (45%) of deaths in children under five - 3.1 million children each year.

In Africa 25% are “chronically undernourished”, but the largest number of

hungry people is in Asia where the population growth is the greatest. The number of undernourished in Asia in 2016 was estimated at 500 million!

The industrialisation of China is seeing much of its farming land taken over for factories, and back in the year 1996, 120 million rural workers found themselves unemployed. The 1996 World Food Summit, attended by delegates from nearly 200 nations, could only achieve a statement affirming “the right of everyone to have access to safe and nutritious food,” but, “no new funds will be forthcoming.”

In 2016 major conflicts around the world especially in the Middle East are disrupting food production. The dislocation of millions of people, as they flee the battle zones and end up in refugee camps, is a major factor in producing famine.

When all of the factors contributing to global famine are taken into consideration, what hope will the world have to feed future billions of mouths? History has a famine terminus, and we must be in the last days! Jesus said there would be “*famines and pestilence*” (Matt. 24:7).

THE SIGN OF GLOBAL EPIDEMICS (PESTILENCES)

Global epidemics are also causing alarm. *TB Alert* estimated that 1.8 million people died in 2015 from Tuberculosis. and there were 10 million new cases of the disease. A quarter of TB deaths were among people with both TB and HIV. It is estimated that a third of the global population is infected with latent TB — and one in ten of these people will go on to develop the disease. Though TB is a global disease 60% live in one of six of countries: China, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan, South Africa.

Diseases such as HIV/AIDS will also take their toll as moral standards drop and drug-taking increases. UNAIDS 2019 statistics indicate that 37.9 million people are living with HIV around the world and 1.1 million died in 2015. In 2015 there were 2.1 million new cases of AIDS reported and 150,000 children contracted HIV/AIDS, largely by mother to child transmission.

Pestilence is one of the signs of the end of the age, and in Zech. 14:12-15 we are told of the plague wherewith God will smite the nations who come against Jerusalem. It will affect humans and animals. We read,

“And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes,

and their tongue shall consume away ... And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague" (Zech. 14:12-15).

The 20th century has seen the development of viruses in laboratories for eradication of pests. Man is engaging in genetic engineering and, while there may be beneficial uses of this knowledge, the danger is that the viruses may not be contained in the laboratory. Viruses have been released to eradicate rabbits, and some nations now see the potential for the use of **biological weapons** for the eradication of humans. These weapons are now termed Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). The 2020 Coronavirus threatens a pandemic.

Once pestilence begins to spread, it is hard to stop, and there is a long lead-time required for the production of antidotes. History tells us how the **Black Death Plague** struck Europe in 1347-1349. According to *The Almanac of Historical Facts* by Robert Stewart Ph.D.,

"...somewhere between **one-quarter and one-third** of Europe's people were carried off in just two years...victims succumbed within two or three days of being infected...(it was) almost always fatal."

Health Authorities give regular warnings of the possibility of **a flu epidemic which could infect 25-30% of the world's population**. In 2016 some Asian countries killed large numbers of birds to prevent the spread of Bird Flu to humans. So many have been killed that there was an egg shortage. One authority estimates up to 100 million people could die in an outbreak of "bird flu".

New techniques used to develop suitable vaccines to counter "bird flu" have been developed, but several months are required for clinical trials before they can be released. Many of the countries where bird flu is likely to have a major impact are too poor to afford the vaccine and doctors will be able to do little more than watch their patients die; that is if they themselves survive. Medical help in war zones is limited.

THE SIGN OF GLOBAL APOSTACY WITHIN CHRISTENDOM

The Bible indicates that the last days will be characterised by a massive departure from the "*faith which was once delivered to the saints*" (Jude 1:3); Christendom will be apostate.

The New Testament Church was built upon the foundation of the **doctrine of the apostles** and prophets (Eph. 2:20-22). The closing verses of the Bible

warn that “*If any man shall **add** unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book*” (Rev. 22:18-19), yet history has shown that there has been departure (apostasy) from the doctrines taught by the apostles which is preserved in the holy Scriptures.

The Roman Catholic Church for centuries persecuted people who printed translations of the Bible. Until recent times Latin liturgies were unintelligible to the people.

The traditions of Rome have both added to, and taken from the Word of God. Doctrines such as purgatory, infant baptism, the confessional, prayers for the dead, salvation by good works, the continual sacrifice of the Mass, celibacy of the priests, prayers to the saints etc are pagan, and are contrary to Scripture.

In December 1854 Pope Pius IX declared “the immaculate conception of the virgin Mary” to be a necessary dogma of the (Catholic) faith. Since then the veneration of Mary has grown and today it is claimed she ascended to heaven and intercedes for those who pray to her. Some in the Catholic Church believe that Mary should be proclaimed **co-Redemptrix with the Lord Jesus Christ!**

The Protestant Reformation (1517) stood against the teachings of Rome and made the Bible available to the people and many were liberated from the apostate system, but as the centuries have passed the Protestant denominations have embraced **liberal and modernistic theology**, denying the verbal inspiration of the Word of God, and essential doctrines such as the person of Christ and His substitutionary, sacrificial work on our behalf.

The Lambeth Conference (1998), which brought together 735 bishops of the Anglican Church worldwide, demonstrated how apostate mainstream Protestantism has become, when it debated whether the Church should bless same-sex marriages and ordain homosexuals to the priesthood! The proposal was defeated as 520 bishops registered their vote for orthodox morality; **almost 30% saw nothing wrong with homosexuality!** The 2008 Lambeth Conference was boycotted by southern Bishops and doubt was expressed whether the 2018 Lambeth Conference would be called since many Bishops may refuse to attend as a protest against the moves **to approve Gay Marriage!**

The Times on Line 22 November 2004 reported that contrary to the decision of the Lambeth Conference some Anglican clergy are conducting private marriage ceremonies for gay and lesbian couples. It appears that some

bishops have found a way around the decision of the Lambeth Conference and are conducting a “blessing” for homosexual couples. The report states:

“Ceremonies by Anglican priests blessing lesbian and gay partnerships increased by 10 percent last year to 300 in England alone.

Despite efforts of conservatives in the world-wide Anglican hierarchy to maintain a strictly Biblical line, the Western Church is heading inexorably down the liberal road.

Bishops are turning a blind eye to gay ceremonies... Officially, churches will refuse to accept civil partnership ceremonies on their premises, but there are plans to offer ‘**gay Christians**’ an unauthorised Anglican ‘pink wedding’ afterwards.”

Opposition from evangelical elements in the Anglican Church could result in some members leaving and forming independent congregations.

Another modern form of apostasy is the Charismatic Movement characterised by claims of miracles, healings, “holy laughter”, “tongues gibberish”, “slaying in the spirit”, “exorcism” and “prophecies”. This behaviour was known as the “Toronto Blessing” because of its connection with the Vineyard Churches at Toronto, Canada. It is common now for people to fall backward under demonic powers in a trance at charismatic meetings.

Some Charismatic preachers promote the “prosperity gospel” and fleece the people for millions of dollars. Some believe that every sin is really a demon, and that we can be perfectly sinless by having our sins (demons) cast out. The entire Charismatic Tongues Movement is the “*doctrine of demons*” and a sign of the last days. Moral failures are common and the Bible warns us:

*“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to **seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy: having their conscience seared with a hot iron**”*
(1 Tim. 4:1-2).

Jesus warned us:

*“Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not **prophesied** in thy name? and in thy name have **cast out devils**? and in thy name done many **wonderful works**? And then will I profess unto them, **I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity**”* (Matt. 7:22-23).

Paul warned there was “**another Jesus...another spirit...another gospel**” (2 Cor. 11:4) so when Charismatics say they love Jesus it may be a familiar spirit they love and not the Lord Jesus Christ.

Another form of last-days apostasy raging in churches is the “contemporary” form of service with **rock music** that turns worship into fleshly entertainment resembling a concert. The repetitious *Hillsong* music and choruses are soulish, have little Biblical content, are egocentric, and have replaced the great doctrinal hymns that were born in times of revival.

Loud music and drums dominate contemporary church services today; very often so loud, that some opt for wearing ear plugs to protect their hearing. Gimmicks such as special lighting effects and the release of smoke to simulate clouds are sometimes added to create atmosphere. This kind of service has no Biblical basis, is soulish, and produces no spiritual fruit.

The contemporary music usually is accompanied by a “worship” team, frequently comprised of three women, inappropriately dressed, who control the service until the pastor is permitted to give a brief devotional talk. Such “worship” is fleshly and even at times sensual. It robs the members of any solid Bible teaching and stunts their spirit growth.

Leadership by women in the Church is in defiance of Scripture that clearly states pastors must be the “*husband of one wife*” (1 Tim. 3:2) and that women are not to “*teach nor usurp authority over the man*” (1 Tim. 2:11-12).

THE SIGN OF THE NATION OF ISRAEL

Of all the signs that indicate we are approaching the Lord’s “*coming, and of the end of the world (age)*”(Matt. 24:3), none is so clear as the sign of the nation of Israel. The “*end of the age*” refers to the short period of seven years called the Great tribulation that immediately precedes the second advent of Christ (Matt. 24:29).

God made a covenant with Abraham about 2,000 BC and promised him, and his seed after him, **the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession** (Gen 17:1-8). He confirmed the promises to Isaac and to Jacob, whose name He changed to Israel (Gen. 26:1-5; 27:26-29).

Under the Mosaic Covenant, about 1,500BC, the children of Israel became a nation, and God established the Levitical priesthood to “*be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations*”(Exod. 40:15).

At the conclusion of the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness, as Israel prepared to possess the land which God had given to them, God set the terms under which the land could be **occupied** in what is known as the **Palestinian Covenant** (Deut. 28-30). God said three things to Israel:

- 1) If you obey Me, you will be blessed **in the land** (Deut. 28:1-14).

- 2) If you disobey Me, you will be besieged, **driven out of the land**, and become *“a proverb and a byword, among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee”*(Deut. 28:37).
- 3) If, after all these things have come upon Israel, they return to the Lord, then God will have compassion and **gather them back to the land** *“from all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath scattered”* them (Deut. 30:1-3), in order to fulfil His promises made to Abraham (Deut. 30:20).

About 1,000 BC, God made a covenant **with David** that his seed would always have someone to reign over Israel (2 Sam. 7:11-29). God said, *“Thy throne shall be established for ever!”*(2 Sam. 7:16), and history records how the descendants of David reigned to the time that Israel was judged by God for its sin and taken to Babylon. The last king of Judah was Zedekiah, but he was rejected as the *“profane wicked prince of Israel”*(Ezek. 21:25-27), and all of his sons were slain by Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 52:10-11). Zedekiah was the brother of the former king, Jehoiakim, not his son. Jehoiakim’s son, Jehoiachin, had already been carried away captive to Babylon in Nebuchadnezzar’s second invasion (597BC), and it was his descendants who maintained the line, providing heirs to the everlasting throne promised to David.

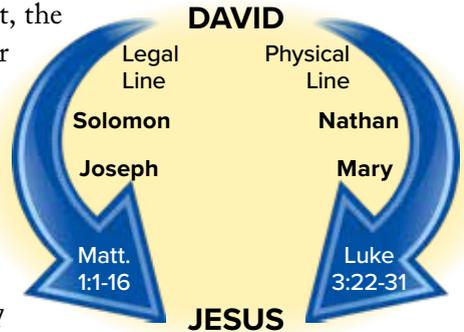
The line of David is traced to Jesus Christ, the son of David, through Joseph His foster father (Matt. 1:1-17), and to Mary His mother (Luke 3:23-38).

Jesus Christ is heir to David’s throne, as the angel declared:

“Thou... shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end” (Luke 1:31-33).

When Jesus Christ presented Himself to the nation as *“Messiah the Prince”* (Dan. 9:25) and King of Israel (Zech. 9:9), the leaders rejected Him and crucified Him. Then 38 years later (AD70), in fulfilment of Dan. 9:26, the Romans under Titus destroyed *“the city and the sanctuary”* and the Jews were scattered throughout the world, where they have continued until the present time.



This scattering out of the land was exactly as foretold in the **Palestinian Covenant** (Deut. 28:15 to 29:29). The reason - rejecting the Word of God, turning to tradition and rejecting Messiah!

Many Scriptures have foretold the **return of Israel in the last days. Israel is at the centre of God's plan** for the ultimate blessing of this world, and without a godly nation of Israel the kingdom of God cannot be established on earth. God said to Abraham,

*"I will make of thee a great nation... and in thee shall **all families of the earth be blessed**"* (Gen. 12:2-3).

Ezekiel prophesied of a day when Israel would return to the land in the "*latter years*" (Ezek 38:8,16) but they **would come back still in unbelief** (Ezek. 36:24-27; 38:22-29). AFTER they returned to the land they would pass through awful tribulation called "*the time of Jacob's trouble*" (Jer. 30:7) which God will use to finally bring them to repentance and to acknowledge Jesus Christ as Messiah. When Jesus Christ comes at the end of that Great Tribulation, the remnant of Israel will be a saved nation, and the Lord says,

"They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son" (Zech. 12:10).

It is a miracle that Jews have maintained their identity during nearly 2,000 years of dispersion among all nations, and now have reassembled in their own land **as an independent nation among the nations of the world**. No other nation in the history of the world has done such a thing.

On 14 May 1948, at 4.00pm, David Ben-Gurion read the **Declaration of Independence**, and at 6. 10 pm on the same day America recognised the State of Israel. Massive immigration followed, as refugees poured in from all over the world. The first census in 1948 showed a total population of 713,000 Jews and 69,000 Arabs.

In 2016 the population of Israel was 8,571,200 and 75% were Jews. In 2005 Israel withdrew 8,500 settlers from the Gaza strip and since that time Islamic Hamas terrorists have taken control resulting in constant conflict and war with Israel. In the north, Israel is threatened by Iran's defacto army, Hezbollah, in Lebanon.

Since 1948 Israel won victories over enormous numerical odds in major conflicts with its Arab neighbours. The Suez Crisis followed on 29 October 1956, then the Six-Day War on 5 June 1967, and later the Yom Kippur War on 6 October 1973.

Israel is recognised as one of the most advanced nations of the world and leads the world in many fields of technology. With a Jewish population about the size of Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong combined, it has its own spy satellites; 200 nuclear warheads; a defence industry that competes on world markets for the supply of sophisticated state-of-the-art weaponry, and its own missiles which match the best produced in USA or Russia!

Israel has developed three anti-missile systems: the *Arrow* which can shoot down Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles, *David's Sling* that can intercept missiles up to 200 km and the *Iron Dome* that intercepts short range rockets and artillery. In 2016 Israel finalised a deal to purchase three nuclear capable submarines to add to her fleet of six submarines all capable of delivering nuclear weapons.

All of this is fulfilment of Bible prophecy which foretold that Israel would become a **military power** in the last days:

“And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem...”(Zech. 14:14), and *“the land of Judah shall be a terror unto the land of Egypt...”*(Isa. 19:17). *“In that day I will make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about... and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place”* (Zech. 12:6).

THE TEMPLE AT JERUSALEM TO BE REBUILT

Jerusalem is the place where God has chosen to put His name (2 Chron. 6:6), and is the only place where Israel was permitted to offer their *“burnt offerings... tithes... heave offerings... vows... freewill offerings, and the firstlings of... herds and... flocks”* (Deut. 12:5-6). There Solomon built the first Temple, which was later destroyed by Nebucadnezzar in 586BC. After the 70-year Babylonian captivity Zerubbabel rebuilt the Temple in 516BC, but King Herod reconstructed it commencing 20 BC. It took 46 years to complete as recorded in John 2:20. The finishing touches were still being applied when Jesus began His ministry.

In AD70 the 2nd Temple was destroyed by the Romans and the collection of the holy half shekel, which was the atonement money paid by each male Jew over 20 years of age for the maintenance of the Tabernacle or Temple (Exod. 30:11-16), was discontinued.

The Bible says that a third Temple must be in existence **during the Great Tribulation**, which is the last seven years before Jesus Christ comes to

reign. This is referred to in Matt. 24:15; 2 Thess. 2:4; and Rev. 11:1-2. The Gentiles will be permitted to occupy **the court** of the Temple (Rev11:1-2), but after Israel repents in the first half of the Tribulation, the Roman prince, Antichrist, will turn against Israel, occupy the Temple, and install his idol image. This is what is called the “*abomination of desolation*”(Matt. 24:15; Dan. 9:27).

A grander **Millennial Temple** will be constructed at the commencement of the millennial reign of Christ, as described in Ezekiel 40 to 43. Priestly service will be recommenced and burnt offerings offered by the priests **in memorial of Christ**.

Any moves by the Jews toward construction of the **Tribulation Temple** must be of immense significance, and indicate that the Tribulation; the Day of the Lord, is at hand. The Rapture of the true Church, which **precedes** the Day of the Lord (1 Thess. 5:1-9; 2 Thess. 2:1-12; Rev. 3:10), must be even closer.

During 1997 it was announced in *Jerusalem Post* that minting and collection of the **holy half shekel**, as prescribed by Moses in Exodus 30:11-16, would begin. Advertisements state that it is “a special fund for the upkeep of Jerusalem”. A new holy half shekel has been minted each year since 1997.



One headline reads:

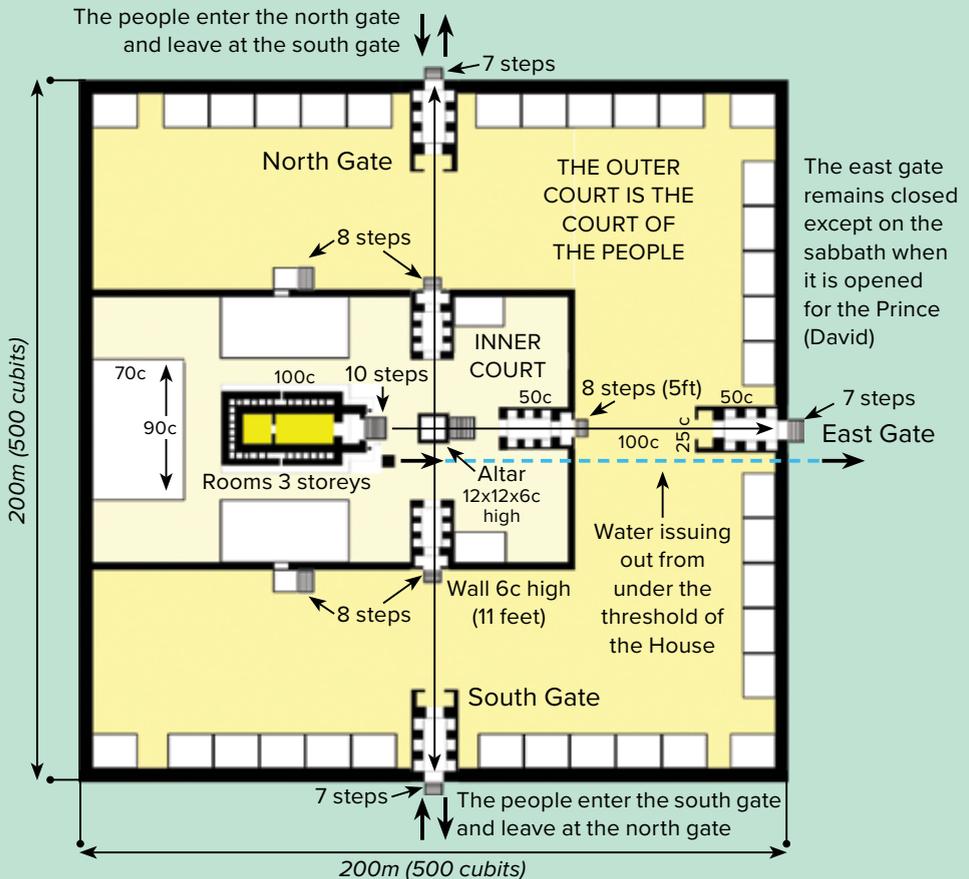
“If you are a Levite age 25 - 50 you are hereby called to ACTIVE DUTY”

Another headline in 1997 read:

*“Why is this Passover different from the last 1928 Seders?
The EXILE HAS ENDED”*

The holy half shekel is sold to Jews around the world, who then donate them once a year to be dedicated or “separated” as “Temple treasure”. Before Israel became a Sovereign State, property sanctified to the Temple (hekdedh) could not be safeguarded, but now that Israel has its own security system the way is made clear for safe storage of the holy half shekel. At a ceremony in Jerusalem on 26 March 1998, the first of the coins were donated and Reuven Prager, who has worked on the project for 15 years, is reported to have declared: “With the sound of this coin dropping (into a special casket), THE EXILE OFFICIALLY ENDS.”

Ezekial’s Millennial Temple - Ezek. chs. 40-42



According to the ancient *trumat ha lishkah* ceremony, *hekdesh* was stored in a special room and used to pay for the daily communal sacrifices and the remainder went to pay for preparing Jerusalem for the three pilgrimage holidays and for building up of the walls of the city.

We know that King Joash (891 - 851BC), collected the holy half shekel to repair the Temple building which had fallen into disrepair. Reuven Prager claims to be a Levite, and says,

“We’ve got a role to fill. Our duty was to create the vessels and maintain them. That’s my job. I just create the vessels.”

According to *Your Jerusalem* April 1998, Reuven Prager wants:

“To take an active role in trying to rebuild the Temple and bring the Messiah...His version of the rebuilding of the Temple does not concur with ideas espoused by other organisations calling for the same goal. He insists that he would never dream of destroying the mosques which sit on the Temple Mount; rather he believes that a careful reading of the Koran yields the view that Moslems should also favour the rebuilding of the Temple.”

This is exactly what the New Testament teaches. During the Great Tribulation John is told to

“Measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the COURT which is WITHOUT THE TEMPLE LEAVE OUT, and measure it not; FOR IT IS GIVEN UNTO THE GENTILES: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months” (Rev. 11:1-2).

In 2016 the Jews erected an altar on Mount Scopus and sacrificed the Passover lamb using instruments and wearing priestly garments prepared by the *Temple Institute* at Jerusalem. A training course has begun to train the priests for Temple service.

THE OSLO PEACE ACCORD

The Oslo Peace Accord is a “land for peace” deal agreed between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and signed in Oslo, Sweden, in September 1993. The Declaration of Principles (DOP) calls for two phases. The first phase hands back to the PLO Jericho, Gaza, Hebron and portion of the West Bank. The second phase deals with the question of Arab refugees and the status of Jerusalem. Simply stated, it is dividing the land as foretold in Scripture! Joel says,

“In those days... when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and

Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations... to the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and PARTED MY LAND!
(Joel 3:1-2).

Daniel tells us that Antichrist will not only plant himself “*in the glorious holy mountain*”, “*magnify himself above all*”, and acknowledge “*a strange god*”, but he will “*DIVIDE THE LAND FOR GAIN*” (Dan. 11:36-45).

In January 2017 a *Paris Conference* attended by 70 nations sought to pass a motion condemning Israel and dividing the land. Neither Israelis nor Palestinians attended and Britain refused to sign the final statement. Britain is *Tarshish* in Bible prophecy and America is one of the “*young lions of Tarshish*” who stand with Israel when she is invaded by Russia and Islam in the first half of the Tribulation.

As already indicated, Antichrist will come out of Europe, from the **Revived Roman Empire** which we see forming up under the banner of the EU. Antichrist will “*confirm*” or “*strengthen*” a 7-year covenant with Israel, which he will break after 3¹/₂ years and cause the Temple sacrifices to cease. The current moves to rebuild the Temple therefore indicate that we must be drawing close to the end of the age!

A JEWISH SANHEDRIN AND A MONARCHY

In October 2004 the Orthodox Jews re-established the Sanhedrin comprised of 71 scholars, and these began meeting on a regular basis to advise the nation on issues affecting its future. Prime Minister Sharon’s *Disengagement Plan*, which would see Jewish settlements removed from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, has been condemned, and soldiers and police were forbidden to participate in the removal of settlers.

The new Sanhedrin would like to see a monarchial system of government replace the present democratic system. Steps have been taken to identify suitable persons who can **trace their lineage back to David**, and already many have been able to do this.

Scripture indicates however, that **they will not achieve their objective**, since Ezekiel wrote that the throne of David would be overturned and “***be no more, until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him***” (Ezek. 21:27).

The angel Gabriel told Mary that **Christ** would be given “*the throne of his father David*” (Luke 1:32).

However, the Jews will succeed in identifying the “*family of the house of David*”, which will be present when Christ, the Son of David, returns. The

genealogy of Jesus Christ is already established in Matthew chapter 1 and Luke chapter 3. Zechariah wrote of that time:

*“And the land shall mourn, every family apart; **the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart**”* (Zech. 12:12).

GLOBAL TERRORISM

There are over 1 billion Muslims in the world, and since 1979 when the Islamic fundamentalist revolution began there has been a new kind of security threat confronting the nations of the world. On 11 September 2001, terrorism assumed a new dimension when the twin towers of the *World Trade Center* were demolished by Islamic fundamentalists who hijacked four American passenger jets. This event goes down in history as a turning-point in world affairs.

When the Ayatollah Khomeini overthrew the Shah of Persia he effectively began a war that could not be won by conventional military tactics alone. The balance of military might and power was so heavily in favour of Israel and her allies that alternative means had to be pursued in order to achieve the goal of Islamic world supremacy. In backward areas such as the African continent, conventional military tactics would prove successful, but against the sophisticated weaponry of the US or EU other less expensive forms of war had to be used.

The fundamental Islamic goal is to totally destroy Israel and any nation that supports her. This makes America a prime target.

For terrorists to be effective against the US they need to have access to chemical, biological or nuclear weapons of mass destruction (WMD) which can be obtained relatively cheaply, and the delivery system needs nothing more than a few thousand suicide fanatics willing to sacrifice their own lives in order to strike fear and confusion into the non-Islamic people of the free world.

Islamic tactics are fuelled by an intense hatred for Israel and a burning desire to obliterate every Jew from the face of the earth.

We know from Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39 and Joel chapter 2 that there will be a massive Islamic attack on Israel in **the first half of the Tribulation**, but even with support from Russia this would be futile unless America can be neutralised. In 2016 America spent \$596 billion on defence, which constituted nearly 50% of world defence expenditure. The percentage spent by the Islamic nations is relatively small.

Jane's Intelligence Digest has warned that Iran is planning a conventional war on Israel and that she intends to neutralise American support for Israel by locating WMD in cities throughout the US. When America comes to Israel's support, then the WMDs would be released creating total chaos and confusion. This is terrorism on a **vast scale**, and the US Government is obviously aware of the threat and is taking measures to prevent it happening. Early in the Tribulation, as the second seal judgment is opened, John saw a red horse and

*“power was given to him that sat thereon to **take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword**”* (Rev. 6:4).

This indicates a **universal state of anarchy**, but it could also be closely connected with **global terrorism**. Terrorism has a total disregard for the rights of innocent people, killing indiscriminately in order to **create fear** and thus remove any sense of safety. Peace and security is taken away from people by terrorism.

What we might expect is that as we draw nearer to the Tribulation, the **threat of terrorism will increase** and will reach a climax soon after the Rapture. It will need to be on a massive scale to slay a quarter of the human race as foretold in the 4th seal judgment (Rev. 6:8).

*“Upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; **men's heart failing them for fear**, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth”* (Luke 21:25-26).

The above verse is part of the Lord's reply to the disciples' question, *“What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world (age)?”* It is clear from the Lord's answer that disturbances will occur **in the oceans** at the end of the age, and that this will cause great anxiety among the nations. The **2004 Boxing Day tsunami off the coast of Sumatra** constitutes one fulfilment of the signs of the last days, but much worse is to follow during the Tribulation.

When Paul wrote to the Hebrew believers he urged them not to forsake *“the assembling of ourselves together... but exhorting one another: AND SO MUCH THE MORE, **AS YE SEE THE DAY APPROACHING**”* (Heb. 10:25).

Paul indicated that **it will be possible** for Christians to *“see the day approaching”*. Someone has said that “coming events always cast a shadow”, and as we draw near to the Day of the Lord (the Tribulation) we can expect to see the storm clouds gathering.

It is also clear from Scripture that calamities will **intensify** as we draw near to the end of the age. Jesus referred to the first half of the 7-year Tribulation as the “*beginning of sorrows*”, or “*beginning of travail*”. Travail pains **become more frequent and more intense** as the moment of birth approaches. It is not unreasonable therefore to expect a growing number of catastrophes at more frequent intervals as the Lord’s return draws near.

An examination of the records of past tsunamis indicates that the December 2004 tsunami was caused by the greatest earthquake (9 on the Richter scale), produced the greatest devastation over the largest area, and took the greatest number of lives of any former tsunami. Even aftershocks recorded 7 on the Richter scale, and that would normally be considered a major earthquake. Twelve days after the initial earthquake an aftershock of 6 on the Richter scale was recorded.

Tsunamis are common in areas where seismic activity is frequently experienced along the earthquake zones which run under the ocean from Alaska past Japan down to Indonesia, past Papua New Guinea and down to New Zealand. Another deep trench runs from north to south off the west coast of North and South America.

The relatively thin crust of the earth is floating on molten magma and buckles and bends as the moon passes, just as the tides rise and fall. Earthquake zones are also areas of frequent volcanic activity can be the cause of tsunamis.

KRAKATOA 1883

A notable case of volcanic activity was Krakatoa, an island off the coast of Indonesia that erupted in 1883 sending a tsunami 120 feet high along the coast of Java and Sumatra killing 36,000 people. The population of Indonesia was much less in 1883, and tourism was not advanced as it is today.

Krakatoa was an explosion of gigantic proportions. Before the eruption the island rose from 1,000 feet below the ocean to 2,660 feet above sea level. It exploded sending 21 cubic km of rock into the air and depositing rock and ash over 800,000 sq. km (300,000 sq.miles). The ocean was so full of floating pumis stone (lightweight gaseous expanded rock) that shipping was interrupted. The noise of the explosion could be heard in Sydney and Tokyo, and sound waves reverberated around the globe for years.

As bad as Krakatoa was, it is minuscule compared with what will occur during the Tribulation when, as John foresaw:

“A great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of

the sea became blood; and the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed” (Rev. 8:8-9).

When one third of sea creatures (trillions) are destroyed by such a violent upheaval their blood will discolour the oceans, just as a whale’s blood turns the water red when it is harpooned. Imagine the tsunamis that will race across the oceans of the world when such a disturbance occurs.

A NASA scientist speculated that when the December 2004 tsunami occurred the axis of the earth had been shifted by one inch. His assertion had not been verified in early January 2005 and awaits measurements from satellite instruments, however, Scripture indicates that the earth will “wobble” during the Tribulation. Isaiah wrote:

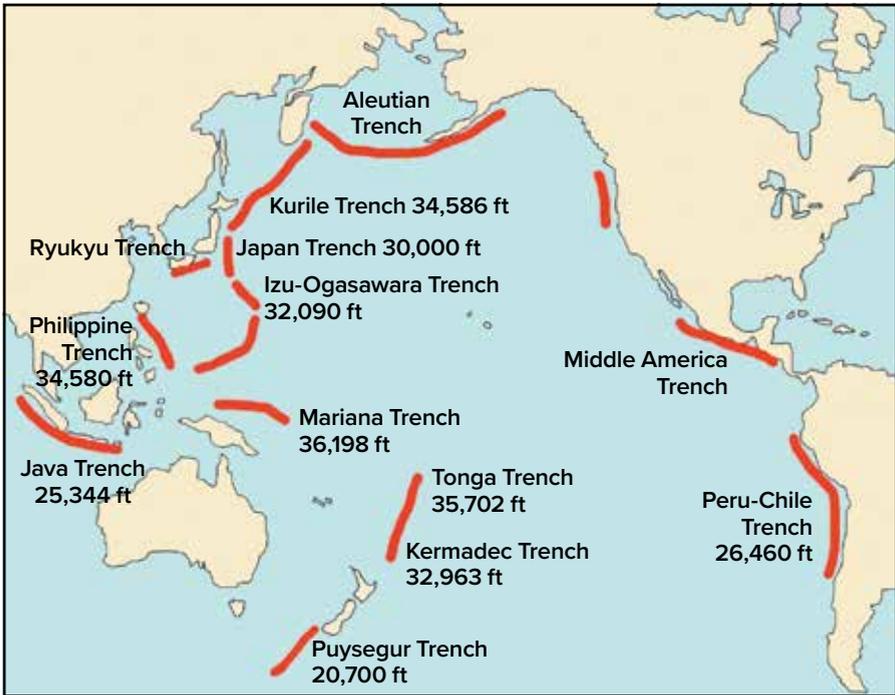
“The earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage” (Isa. 24:19-20).

Scientists tell us that the axis of the earth already “wobbles” within certain limits, but nothing compared with what will happen during the Tribulation.

WORST TSUNAMIS IN HISTORY

The four worst tsunamis on record were in Sumatra in 2004, Fukushima in 2011, Lisbon in 1755 and Krakatau in 1883. The following is a list of the 10 worst tsunamis on record:

- 1) Sumatra, Indonesia - 26 December 2004 left 230,000 dead after a 9.1RS earthquake.
- 2) Fukushima, Japan - 11 March 2011 left 18,000 dead and 452,000 relocated. Cost of reconstruction was \$235 billion.
- 3) Lisbon, Portugal - 1 November 1755 left 60,000 dead
- 4) Krakatau, Indonesia - 27 August 1883 left 40,000 dead from 37m high waves and volcanic eruptions.
- 5) Enshunada Sea, Japan - 20 September 1498 left 31,000 dead.
- 6) Nankaido, Japan - 28 October 1707 left 30,000 dead.
- 7) Sanriku, Japan - 15 June 1896 left 22,000 dead from waves 38. 2m high.
- 8) Northern Chile - 13 August 1868 left 25,000 dead from waves 21m high.
- 9) Ryuku Islands, Japan - 24 April 1771 left 12,000 dead from waves 15m high.
- 10) Ise Bay, Japan - 18 January 1586 left 8,000 dead from 6m high waves.



A great deal of research on tsunamis is being carried out to provide early warning systems. About half of the American population of 325 million (in 2016) live within 50 km of the coastline, and since tsunamis travel at the speed of a jet liner it is imperative that efficient early warning systems be set up to allow maximum time for evacuation.

OTHER NATURAL DISASTERS

As bad as the December 2004 tsunami was, it is not the worst natural disaster in history. *Time* magazine 10 January 2005 indicated that the greatest of all natural disasters occurred in China when the Yangtze River flooded in 1931, drowning 145,000 and killing a staggering 3 million through the famine and disease which followed.

In 1970, cyclonic floods claimed 300,000 lives in Bangladesh, and back in 1923 a massive earthquake in Japan took an estimated 140,000 lives in Tokyo and Yokohama.

DISEASE THE WORST KILLER

The greatest of all global catastrophes, apart from the Biblical Flood in Noah's day, was undoubtedly the Black Death (Bubonic) plague of 1347-50. Within

20 years approximately **one third** of the population of England, Europe, and the Near East perished. The total number of dead cannot be accurately stated but **estimates range up to 40 million; 25 million in Europe and up to one half of England alone.** Numbers in Russia and the Near East are uncertain.

The **Black Death plague** came from the Far East on ships and was transmitted by flea-ridden rats at every port. So great was the loss of life that there was a labour shortage, and new conditions of employment were demanded by the peasants, who saw the opportunity to revolt.

The **Great Plague of London** was another significant disaster and took 70,000 lives in 1665, according to the *Oxford Encyclopedia of World History*.

Following WWI the worldwide **Influenza Epidemic of 1918 took 22 million** lives, far exceeding the deaths of the Great War. In WWI, 8.5 million died, 21 million were injured, and 7.5 million were prisoners and missing, according to *Timetables of History* by Bernard Grun.

The **AIDS epidemic** is still raging in spite of advances in treatment. For the 8 years ending 2016, there have been approximately 1.9 million new cases reported annually. There is no way unreported cases can be estimated. AIDS is largely a sexually transmitted disease especially among homosexuals and the behaviour of homosexuals can't be controlled. It is estimated there are about 37 million cases of HIV globally in 2016 and approximately 2 million die annually. The Bible says of those who practice homosexuality that they "*receive in themselves that recompence of their error which is meet*" (Rom. 1:27). The tragedy is that homosexual men can transmit the virus to innocent wives and their children. One report stated:

"An average of 1,068 young women were infected with HIV every day last year (2015), and AIDS remains the leading cause of death for women aged 15–44 globally."

The Coronavirus in December 2019 was first identified in Wuhan the capital of Hubei, China, and has spread across the globe with fears of a pandemic. Cities have been "locked down", travel restricted, hospitals overloaded and 2020 is yet to see the full extent of this deadly virus.

THE WORST IS YET TO COME - AFTER THE RAPTURE

When one catastrophe occurs the nations usually rally to send relief but in the Tribulation there will be global catastrophes occurring simultaneously; transportation will be disrupted and each country will be coping with its own problems so there will be little chance of international relief efforts.

Jesus indicated that for the seven years after the Rapture there will be such devastation on earth that “*except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved*” (Matt. 24: 22). Imagine what it will be like with the following events occurring in quick succession within a short 7-year period:

- 1) Terrorism will take peace from the earth and there will be wars, famine, and disease that will **wipe out 25% of world population** (Rev. 6:4-8).
- 2) Russia, and her Muslim associates; Iran, Turkey, Libya and Sudan will attempt to occupy the Middle East, but will be destroyed by God on the mountains of Israel as Israel repents of rejecting Messiah (Ezek. chs. 38-39; Joel ch. 2).
- 3) Two global earthquakes will shake the globe; one in the first half of the Tribulation (Ezek. 38:19-20) when men will flee into the rocks of the mountains and want to die for fear of those things which are coming on the earth (Rev. 6:12-17), and the other at the end of the Tribulation (Rev. 16:19). The “*the cities of the nations*” such as Tokyo, Shanghai, Los Angeles, Mexico City, etc, with populations running into many millions of people, will fall.
- 4) A great island mountain will plunge burning into the sea and **one third of all sea creatures and ships** will be destroyed (Rev. 8:8).
- 5) The world will be tinder dry from a drought that will last for at least 3 ½ years. Hail and lightning will ignite a bushfire that will destroy one third of the earth’s trees and grass (Rev. 8:7; 11:6).
- 6) Asia will erupt in awful warfare that will cause the death of one third of the world’s population. (Rev. 9:14-21). Weapons of mass destruction (WMD) will almost certainly be used.
- 7) Demon activity will reach a new level as the bottomless pit (Greek “*abussos*” meaning *abyss*) is opened, and spirit beings will attack humans (Rev. 9:1-11).
- 8) A world ruler will arise from the revived Roman Empire (Europe), and attain global influence establishing himself as God in a rebuilt Jewish Temple at Jerusalem. At this time all Jews will have turned to Christ, and Antichrist will attempt to annihilate the nation. He will also seek to destroy every religion on the face of the earth so that he alone is worshipped (Rev. 13:1-18; 2 Thess. 2:1-12).

Jesus warned us that the last days would be “as it was in the days of Noah” and also “as it was in the days of Lot” (Luke 17:27-30).

The “*days of Noah*” were full of violence, there was a population explosion, morals had collapsed and “*every imagination of the thoughts of men’s heart were only evil continually*”. The “*days of Lot*” were days of gross homosexuality so much so that God destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah with fire from heaven. In those days they

*“did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. **Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man shall be revealed**”* (Luke 17:28-30).

All of the Biblical signs are casting their shadow over the earth:

After nearly 2,000 years Israel is re-established in the land; Russia, Turkey and Iran already have military bases on Israel’s northern border; Britain and America are aligned with Israel; the Roman Empire is being revived under the flag of the EU; and the Asian “kings of the East” are mobilising. A world population explosion is here; Islamic terrorism, warfare and violence are multiplying at an unprecedented rate and diseases such as AIDS have reached epidemic proportions. Add to these signs the fact that Christendom has abandoned the Bible and false prophets abound making all kinds of predictions and there can be no doubt that we are drawing near to the Great Tribulation at the end of the age.

The next event on God’s prophetic calendar will be the Rapture of every true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ before the Tribulation. Jesus said the time would come when

“there shall be two in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left” (Luke 17:34-36).

Suddenly, in a moment of time, the Christians who have died will be **raised** and caught up to heaven and the living who are saved through faith in Christ will be **changed** and caught up before the Tribulation begins (1 Thess. 4:13-18; 5:1-9). **It is time to seek the Lord!**

Section 6

Outline of the Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ

*“Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words
of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written
therein: for the time is at hand”*

(Rev. 1:3).



"The things which thou hast seen"
The Vision on Patmos - Chapter 1

"The things which ARE"
This Church Age - Chapters 2 & 3

RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH
Chapters 4 & 5

The Marriage of Christ and His Church in Heaven

SECOND ADVENT
Chapter 19

"Let your loins be girded about, And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately."
(Luke 12:35-36).



The Great White Throne Judgment

TRIBULATION
"The things which shall be HEREAFTER"

First half of Seven Years Chapters 6, 7, 8 & 9	Mid-point of the Seven Years Chapters 10, 11, 12, 13 & 14	Second half of Seven Years Chapters 15, 16, 17 & 18
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"The things which shall be HEREAFTER"
1,000 years Kingdom on earth - Chapters 21 & 22

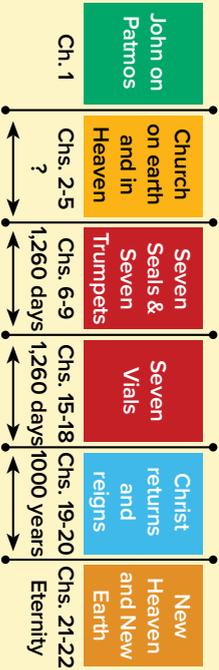
"The things which shall be HEREAFTER"
New Heaven & Earth - Chapters 21 & 22

"Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand"
(Rev.1 :3).

The Book of the Revelation

Events at the mid-point of Tribulation

Chs. 10-14



The Church at the BEMA Seat of Christ for Rewards

The Rapture of the Church

Gospel of the Grace of God preached by the Church

Gospel of the Kingdom preached by 144,000 Jews

Temple built
Temple sacrifices cease

2 Witnesses caught up

The Everlasting Gospel preached by an Angel

Israel flees to a wilderness refuge
Israel welcomes Messiah

The Second Coming of Christ with His Saints

The Law of the LORD preached by Jews

Tribulation martyrs raised

Antichrist confirms a 7-year covenant with many - Dan. 9:27

The dead "in Christ" raised and the living saints changed

Occupies Egypt, many countries, & the glorious land

SEALS 1 2 3 4 5 6

Israel converted when Russia invades (Ezek. 39:22)

EGYPT, THEN RUSSIAN - ISLAMIC INVASION OF ISRAEL

WAR No.1

1,260 days

1 2 3 4

Four ecological judgments

5 6

SEVENTH SEAL = SEVEN TRUMPETS

1,260 days

Abomination of Desolation

SEVENTH SEAL = SEVEN TRUMPETS

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

SEVEN VIALS

3rd WOE - Judgment on Gentile Nations, Antichrist, and apostate Christendom

THE KINGS OF THE EAST AND ALL NATIONS GATHER FOR THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON

1st WOE - Abyss opens

2nd WOE - 200 million army prepared

WAR No.2

Living saved (sheep) of all nations enter the Kingdom
Living unsaved (goats) of all nations cast into lake of fire

1,000 years to the resurrection of all

souls in hades to stand before the Great White Throne

Church age from Pentecost to the Rapture

THE GREAT TRIBULATION = THE DAY OF THE LORD = ISRAEL'S 70TH "WEEK" = THE TIME OF JACOB'S TROUBLE

1,000 years reign of Christ on the earth

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION

THE Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ is not difficult to understand once we are aware of the God-given key to its interpretation. That key is found in Rev 1:19, and it divides the book into three parts. These parts identify past, present, and future events, from the early Church to the new heaven and new earth.

The **KEY** verse reads as follows:

*“Write the things **which thou hast SEEN**, and the things **which ARE**, and the things **which shall be HEREAFTER**” (Rev. 1:19).*

The book is a revelation of **“things** (events) *which must shortly (quickly) come to pass*”. In chapter one John sees a vision of the risen Lord. Chapters 2 and 3 are seven letters to *“the seven churches **which are in Asia**”* (Rev. 1:4), communicating the Lord’s commendation and concern for their spiritual state. From chapter 4 to chapter 22 we have a description of those events which are **future** to the Church Age, beginning with the words:

*“Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be **hereafter**”* (Rev. 4:1).

The **past event** is the vision of the Lord which John saw on the Isle of Patmos. The **present** describes the Churches of Asia existing in John’s day, but could be typical of any individual Church throughout history. They are also prophetic of the historical progress of Christendom from Pentecost to the Rapture, when the Church Age will be complete.

The **future events** are those which are future to the Church Age, beginning with the Rapture of the Church followed by the Great Tribulation immediately followed by the return of Christ to the earth. The millennial kingdom follows concluding with the second resurrection to damnation of the lost, and the eternal new heaven and new earth.

Thus we have the key to the interpretation of the book: God has divided it as shown in the diagram.



**PART 1 - THE THINGS WHICH THOU
HAST SEEN (CHAPTER 1)**

THE Revelation (αποκαλυψις) of Jesus Christ is the “unveiling” to John on the Isle of Patmos of “*things which must shortly (suddenly) come to pass*”. The Father revealed these **events** to Christ for “*his servants*”, and Christ communicated them to John by His angel.

The book begins with a vision of the Lord Jesus Christ in his full Deity as follows:

- a) He is the second person of the Godhead with the Father and the Holy Spirit. He is equal and eternal, without beginning and without ending (vs. 4-5).
- b) He is “*the faithful witness*” - perfect in His earthly testimony (v. 5).
- c) He is “*the first begotten of the dead*”- nobody could rise in resurrection power before Him (v. 5). He made resurrection possible.
- d) He is “*the prince of the kings of the earth*” - He now sits on the throne of heaven, and one day will come as King of kings and Lord of lords to reign over the earth (v. 8).
- e) He is “*the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending*” - Creator and final Judge of all creation.
- f) He is the Eternal God, “*which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty*” (v. 8) - He is not a created being.

The above description leaves us in no doubt about the absolute Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Any lesser description of Him would be “*another Jesus*” (2 Cor. 11:4). The ultimate triumph and climax of God’s plan is the victory of Christ over all the forces of wickedness, be they human or demonic, and so John exclaims:

“Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen” (Rev. 1:7).

At Christ’s second coming every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that He is Lord to the glory of God the Father! (Phil. 2:10-11). He will come visibly in the clouds of heaven, as declared by the angel (Acts 1:9-11), and as Jesus Himself said (Matt. 24:30).

Israel, who pierced Him, will be repentant when Jesus comes again; they “*shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son*” (Zech. 12: 10).

At that time one will ask, "*What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends*" (Zech. 13:6).

Behold, He is coming in clouds of the sky,
Every eye shall behold Him, exalted on high;
Israel who pierced Him will cry out aloud,
Remembering the cross, the grave, and the cloud.
The Alpha, Omega, beginning and end,
For His elect nation His angels will send,
And Gentiles, now bending before Him, will fall,
As Jesus, at last, is crowned LORD OF ALL!

After the Lord returns, He reigns, as Paul indicated:

*"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. **For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.** The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death"* (1 Cor. 15:24-26).

It is necessary for Christ to reign 1,000 years on earth to put all things under His feet and finally present the restored kingdom, which was lost to Satan in the garden of Eden, back to the Father.

THE LORD'S DAY AND THE DAY OF THE LORD

John wrote: "*I was in the Spirit on the **Lord's day***". This refers to **the first day of the week** when the early Christians met together for fellowship. We should remember that **the Lord rose on the first day** of the week at the feast of Firstfruits - He was the "*firstfruits of them that slept*" (1 Cor. 15:20-23). The Church was born on the day of Pentecost, which was also the **first day** of the week. Christians do not keep the sabbath, which God said was "*a sign between me and **the children of Israel for ever***" (Exod. 31:15-17; Col. 2:16).

The Day of the Lord is quite different from the Lord's Day. Throughout the Scriptures the Day of the LORD refers to a period of Divine judgment against nations and at the end of the age it will refer to a time when God's wrath is poured out on the nations during the 70th "week" (seven years) of Daniel's prophecy (Dan. 9:24-27).

The last-days Day of the LORD is called by Jesus "*a time of great tribulation*" (Matt. 24:21-29); by Jeremiah, "*the time of Jacob's trouble*" (Jer. 30:7); by Daniel, "*a time of trouble*" (Dan. 12:1); and by Joel "*a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness*" (Joel 2:1-2).

This Day of the LORD occurs **immediately before** the second coming of

Christ to the earth (Matt. 24:29-31), and **cannot begin until the Church Age is terminated** by the Rapture of the Church. Paul says,

*“That day (the Day of the LORD) shall not come, except there come a falling away first (literally, “the **departure** first”), and that man of sin be revealed”*(2 Thess. 2 :1-9).

After the Church departs, Antichrist will be revealed and the last 7 years of Israel’s history will begin before the Kingdom is established.

The Day of the LORD begins with the sound of the trumpet of God. (1 Thess. 4:16; 1 Cor. 15:51-54). The trumpets were used in Israel to call an assembly of God’s people, to sound an alarm of war, and for Israel to mobilise. When the trumpet of God sounds the Church will be assembled to the Lord in the air, an alarm will be sounded to the Gentile nations of imminent Tribulation, and Israel will be mobilised to become God’s testimony during the Great Tribulation!

THE VISION OF THE RISEN LORD

The vision given to John needs no explanation. John said,

“I saw seven golden candlesticks, and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the breasts with a golden girdle.

***His head** and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow:*

***his eyes** were as a flame of fire;*

***his feet** like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace;*

*and **his voice** as the sound of many waters.*

*He had **in his right hand** seven stars: and*

***out of his mouth** went a sharp twoedged sword: and*

***his countenance** was as the sun shineth in his strength.”*



This is how the Lord appeared to John. John knew the Lord and when he saw Him he was assured of the veracity of the vision. What John saw constitutes the **first section** of the Book of the Revelation.

John fell at Jesus’ feet as dead, but then was told: *“Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death”* (Rev. 1:17-18).

The Number Seven

The number seven occurs 44 times in this book. It is the number of “fullness” or “completion”, and the seven golden candlesticks signify seven Churches in Asia (Rev. 1:20). They also describe the **complete** Church Age from Pentecost to the Rapture, and the book is therefore addressed to the whole Church. We will see this in Chapters 2 & 3.

Revelation gives a complete picture all the prophecies concerning the Jews, the Gentiles and the Church in the last days.

Angels in the Revelation

There are 76 references to angels in this book. No other book in the Bible reveals so much about the heavenly host and the reason for this must surely be that the greater part (chs. 4-22) is about what John saw **AFTER** he was caught up through the open door into heaven (Rev. 4:1-2). From that point onward he sees the things which must be hereafter (Rev. 4:1), ie **after this present Church Age** which closes with the sound of the trumpet and the Lord’s call to the Church to “*Come up hither!*” (1 Thess. 4: 16; 1 Cor. 15:52; Rev. 4:1).

PART 2 - THE THINGS WHICH ARE (CHAPTERS 2 & 3)

THE seven Churches of Asia were located on the western end of Turkey as we know it today; to each of these Churches Christ reveals Himself in a manner appropriate to the spiritual condition of that Church.

Just as Jesus predicted that tares would grow amongst the wheat, birds would lodge in the branches, and leaven would be mixed with meal (Matt. 13:24-33), so the description of these seven Churches indicates that there are varying degrees of apostasy in local Churches.

The “*overcomers*” in each Church represent the “true Church” within the visible **professing** Church. John used the term “*overcomer*” to refer to those who are “*born again*” (1 John 5:4-5; Rev. 21:7). This is how it has ever been, and it will continue so until the true Church departs at the Rapture; then all that will remain will be the final apostate Church; Mystery Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth located at Rome (Rev. 17:5).

It is the presence of the Holy Spirit in the true Church, the body of Christ, which restrains the full manifestation of apostasy.

*“The mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who **now hinders** will hinder, until he be **taken out of the way**. And then shall that Wicked (one) (Antichrist) be revealed...”* (2 Thess. 2:7-8).

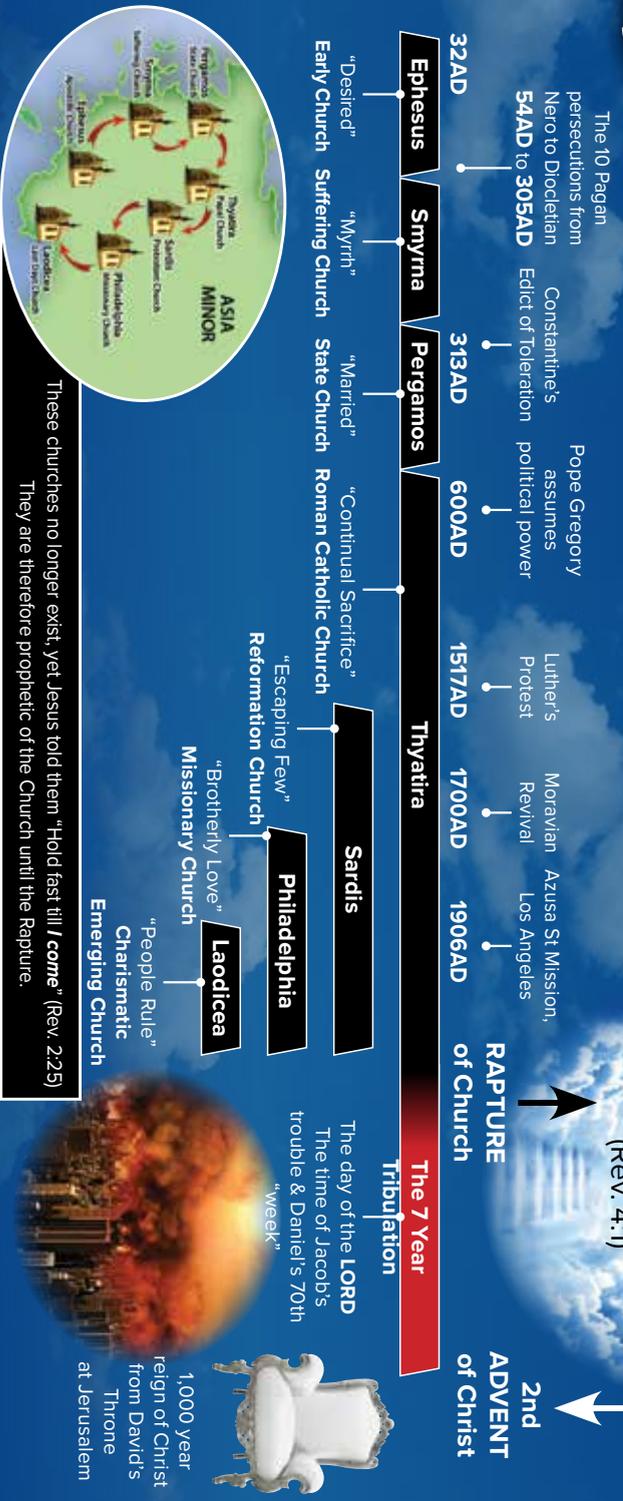
Each of the seven letters records:

- a) The Revelation of Christ to that Church
- b) Christ’s commendation of that Church
- c) Christ’s condemnation of that Church (except Smyrna and Philadelphia)
- d) The Exhortation of Christ to that Church
- e) The Appreciation of Christ for the Overcomers (the saved remnant).

The apostate Church will go into the Tribulation and will co-operate with the Antichrist since she is seen as a harlot woman riding the Beast. However, after Antichrist is given global power by the ten kings of the revived Roman Empire, and is demon possessed from the bottomless pit half-way through the Tribulation, he will turn on apostate Christendom and Rome will be burned.

THE SEVEN STAGES OF CHRISTENDOM

as foretold in the Seven Letters to the Seven Churches (Rev: 2 & 3)



These churches no longer exist, yet Jesus told them "Hold fast till I **come**" (Rev. 2:25). They are therefore prophetic of the Church until the Rapture.



1,000 year reign of Christ from David's Throne at Jerusalem

NOTE: The "overcomers" in each stage are the **saved** remnant in Christendom. They will not be "blotted out" of the Book of Life and will be kept "from **the HOUR** of temptation which shall come upon all the world..." (Rev. 3:10)

THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS - "DESIRED" (REV. 2:1-7)

Practical Message: To this Church the Lord is revealed walking in the midst of the seven candlesticks, and He commends the Church for its patience, **faithfulness to the Word of God**, and hatred of the deeds of the Nicolaitanes who sought to impose hierarchal authority over the believers. (nicolaitan means "*victorious over the people*"). Irenaeus, writing in the 2nd century, states that they had "a matter of indifference to practice adultery, and to eat things sacrificed to idols."

Condemnation was expressed for **the loss of first love for Christ**, and the exhortation is to "*Remember...and repent!*"(Rev. 2:5). Remember the joy of salvation, repent of formalism, and serve the Lord with a rejoicing, excited, loving heart.

They are warned that their candlestick of testimony will be removed unless they repent.

Prophetic Message: The Ephesian Church is a picture of the **early Apostolic Church** which spread the Gospel throughout the world (Col. 1:6).

The Lord was in their midst, and they faithfully exposed and dealt with false apostles. The early Church stood against those who would introduce an ecclesiastical hierarchy and accomodate the immoral pagan idolators - the Nicolaitanes. The early Church hated these deeds as God does. It was the rise of this hierarchial class within the Church that became the channel for much traditionalism, superstition, and compromise with the pagans.

The early Church was therefore fundamental in doctrine, but during the second generation began to lose its first love. Its faithful stand for the great doctrines of the Word ceased to be warmed by a rich, loving and personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

THE CHURCH AT SMYRNA - "MYRRH" (REV. 2:8-11)

Practical Message: Christ is revealed as the "*first and the last, which was dead, and is alive*" (Rev. 2:8). This Church is commended because it suffered for Christ. There is no word of condemnation.

The Lord is gentle with those who suffer, for He trod that path Himself. He "*was dead, and is alive!*" Death is not the end but the path to victory.

The exhortation is to be "*faithful unto death*", and the reward is a "*crown of life*". "*He that overcometh (is saved) shall not be hurt of the second death*" (Rev. 2:11). The second death (Rev. 20:14-15), which is the lake of eternal fire, can never harm them. Some may be burned at the stake on earth, but that

is nothing compared with the lake of fire which is the portion of all the unsaved. Suffering on earth makes heaven all the sweeter, and we know that *“if we suffer, we shall also reign with him”* (2 Tim. 2:12).

Prophetic Message: The meaning of Smyrna is “myrrh”, and this suggests suffering since it was used in the burial of loved ones. It was used by Nicodemus when he laid to rest the body of our Lord Jesus Christ (John 19:39).

Smyrna represents the second stage of Church history, which saw what Church historians have called the **“Ten Pagan Persecutions”**. Under pagan Rome, Christians suffered terribly. Many died for the cause of Christ. These periods of persecution occurred during the reign of the following emperors:

- 1) Nero (AD54-68)
- 2) Domitian (AD81-96)
- 3) Trajan (AD98-117)
- 4) Marcus Aurelius (AD161-180)
- 5) Severus (AD193-211)
- 6) Maxinium (AD235-238)
- 7) Decius (AD240-251)
- 8) Valerian (AD253-260)
- 9) Aurelian (AD270-275)
- 10) Diocletian (AD285-305)

Scripture says in Rev 2:10,

“Ye shall have tribulation ten DAYS: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”

Sometimes persecution was directed at the leaders of the Church, as Rome endeavoured to “cut down the tall poppies”. The Scriptures were targeted, and those who refused to surrender their copies were put to death. However, the Church grew, and the “blood of the martyrs became the seed of the Church.”



THE CHURCH AT PERGAMOS - "MARRIED" (REV. 2:12-17)

Practical: To this Church, Christ is revealed with *"the sharp sword with two edges"*. The Word of God is a sharp sword *"dividing asunder"* (Heb. 4:12).

The Church is commended for holding fast the Lord's name and not denying the faith, even in persecution but condemnation comes for some who have compromised by holding the doctrine of Balaam and the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes. Error was coming in.

The false prophet Balaam was forbidden to curse Israel, but taught Balak, the king of Moab, how to destroy Israel by introducing immorality and idolatry into their ranks (Numbers ch. 25). The Church at Pergamos was to be separate from apostasy and the sins of the flesh. The Bible says,

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2:15).

Unless repentance takes place, the Lord will fight against the apostates with the sword of His mouth to separate them from their unholy associations.

To the overcomers who refuse to partake in pagan feasts God will give heavenly manna, a white stone of acquittal, and a new personal name indicating a close personal relationship with Christ. (In Roman courts, the members of the court would cast a white stone into a bowl to indicate innocence).

Prophetic: Pergamos describes the period of Church history from AD 313 to 600 when the Church was "married" to the State. After Emperor Diocletian there was a power struggle in the Roman Empire; Constantine emerged as the undisputed ruler. During the struggle for power he claimed to have seen a vision of a cross in the sky, and the words, "By this conquer".

He adopted this symbol, and aligned himself with the large number of persecuted Christians.

In AD313, Constantine issued the Edict of Toleration and Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire, replacing the Roman mystery religions.

Thus Christianity became popular, and in AD325 Constantine presided over 318 bishops at the Council of Nicea and produced the Nicene Creed. The popularisation of Christianity opened the door to a flood of superstition and error.

Monasticism, secularism, veneration of Mary, prayers to martyrs and saints all began in this period, and the clerical system flourished.

The doctrine of Balaam which taught tolerance to idolatry and immorality, and the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes which elevated the clergy over the people, were certainly characteristic of the Pergamum period. The Byzantine State Church prepared the way for the Dark Ages under papal rule.

***THE CHURCH AT THYATIRA -
"CONTINUAL SACRIFICE" (REV. 2:18-29)***

Practical: To Thyatira, the Lord is revealed as the

"Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass."

Christ is revealed in judgment to this Church. No other Church has descended to such depths of depravity, and no other Church has such awful judgment pronounced against it. Its adherents have descended to

"the depths of Satan", and God will "kill her children with death".

Commendation is given for **works** more than faith, but condemnation is expressed for awful idolatry and immorality introduced by a prophetess called Jezebel.

There is a clear parallel here with the Jezebel of Old Testament times who was the wife of Ahab, king of Israel. She was also the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians. She slew the prophets of the Lord (1 Kings 18:4,13), funded 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of the groves (1 Kings 18:19), and promoted idolatry and immorality in Israel. Spiritual apostasy is often accompanied by moral depravity.



The only word of comfort is for those who “*have not known the depths of Satan*” (v. 24). They are to “*hold fast till I come*” (v. 25), and then will be rewarded. They will reign with Christ in His kingdom.

In contrast, the children of this apostate Church will be cast into **Great Tribulation** and killed.

Prophetic: Thyatira aptly describes the fourth stage of Church history when the papacy began about AD600 with Gregory the Great (AD590–604). The continual sacrifice of the Mass became the central feature of the idolatrous Roman Catholic worship. Thyatira was also characterised by a woman who taught idolatry and fornication. Idolatry in Scripture is called fornication (Ezek. 16:20–41).

In addition, this church has the character of Jezebel, who slew the faithful prophets of the Lord. The same brutal character is seen in the Romish church which is

“drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus” (Rev. 17:6).

An example of Romish brutality is seen in the martyrdom of an 18-year-old Scottish girl, Margaret Wilson, and an elderly widow, Margaret McLachlan, who were tied to stakes on the Solway Firth on 11th May 1685 and drowned as the tide came in simply for refusing to deny their faith in Christ. They died quoting the Scriptures and singing hymns as the tide rose above their heads.

Romish worship also has a woman at the centre as Mary is set forth as “the Queen of Heaven”. This pagan practice existed in Jeremiah’s day and was condemned by the prophet (Jer. 44:15–27).



The Roman Church will continue into the Great Tribulation.

“Behold, I will cast her... and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation...” (Rev. 2:22).

During the Great Tribulation apostate Rome will be judged; God said:

“I will kill her children with death” (Rev. 2:23).

Rome’s destruction is described in Revelation ch. 17, where the harlot woman is clearly apostate Christendom headed up by Rome during the Tribulation (Rev. 17:9,18). After Christendom rides the fourth beast to power (i.e. the

Revived Roman Empire), Antichrist will turn against Christendom.

“The ten horns... shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire” (Rev. 17:16).

Christendom has craved political power throughout the Holy Roman Empire, and lately by its influence in the EU. However, only the saved remnant will reign with Christ (Rev. 2:26), and these will be given the “*morning star*” (i.e. they will be caught up at the Rapture). Christ’s second coming is likened to the “*Sun of righteousness*” arising (Mal. 4:2), but the “*morning star*” rises **first**; Christ will come to catch away the saved **before** the Tribulation.

THE CHURCH AT SARDIS - “ESCAPING FEW” (REV. 3:1-6)

Practical: To Sardis, the Lord is revealed as the One who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars (seven angels).

“The seven Spirits of God” refers to the seven aspects of the Holy Spirit. He is the “spirit of the Lord...the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might (power), the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord” (Isa. 11:2).

Little commendation is offered. A **few** were not defiled (v4) but their works were “*not found perfect before God*” and the Church had “***a name that thou livest, and art dead***” (v1).

They were to

*“be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are **ready to die**... remember...hold fast and repent.”*

The warning is given, “*If therefore thou shalt not watch, **I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee***” (v. 3).

The saved remnant, the overcomers, will walk with the Lord in white, in the righteousness of the saints (Rev. 19:8), a righteousness which is imputed by the Lord Jesus.

Prophetic The Sardis Church is prophetic of the Reformation Church which began in 1517 when Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to the door of the Church at Wittenberg. He was protesting against the sale of indulgences sold by Johann Tetzel in order to raise money for the repair of St Peter’s Cathedral in Rome.

Printing had been invented in 1450 and in 1516 Erasmus produced his printed **Greek Text**, and when Luther translated this into German the superstition of Rome was exposed to the people. Instead of salvation by works, justification by faith was preached and many entered into salvation.

Thus we have the “*escaping few*” breaking free from the clutches of the papacy.

In time Protestantism became formal, clung to infant baptism, a priestly hierarchal system, vestments, and union of Church and state; even **anti-Semitic**. It had a name to live doctrinally, but was void of spiritual life. **Reformed theology** is Calvinistic, holds to the Amillennial position and a General Resurrection. It denies any future for Israel in prophecy, the Rapture of the Church, and Christ’s future kingdom on earth. Protestantism is not watching for the Lord’s return and the Lord says,

“If therefore thou shalt not watch (for His coming), I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee” (Rev. 3:3).



THE CHURCH AT PHILADELPHIA - “BROTHERLY LOVE” (REV. 3:7-13)

Practical: The Lord reveals Himself as the One that is “*holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth.*” This is an obvious reference to Isa. 22:22 which speaks of Christ who, as the rightful heir to the throne of David, would be “*cut down*”, and the glory of His father’s house (David’s house) would be “*cut off*”. Christ was “*cut down*” at Calvary in AD32, and the glory of his Father’s house (Israel) was “*cut off*” in AD70 (v. 25).

Only commendation and an open door are offered to this Church. Their enemies would know that God had loved them.

Because they have “*kept the word*”, the Lord promises to keep them from “*the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world*” (v. 10). They are to “*hold that fast*” in view of the Lord’s return, and not let any man take their crown. To this Church Jesus said,

“Behold, I come quickly!”

Overcomers will be forever with the Lord; will “*go no more out*”; will bear God’s name and the name of **new Jerusalem** which is reserved for the bride, the Lamb’s wife (Rev. 21:2,9-10).

Prophetic: The Church at Philadelphia foretells the *great evangelical awakening* which occurred during the 18th and 19th centuries.

By the beginning of the 1700s the Reformation had broken the power of Rome in the north of Europe. Luther's German translation of the Scriptures was completed in 1522 and Tyndale's English translation in 1526. The 1611 King James English version of the Bible gained universal acceptance and the Word of God was spread across the world through missionary societies. Rome could do little to stop it. God opened a door to this Church which no man could shut! (Rev. 3:8)

Evangelists and missionaries like the Wesleys, Whitfield, Hudson Taylor, Moody, Finney, William Booth, CT Studd, and the Moravians saw many thousands respond to the Gospel. The Brethren Movement, and Faith Missions, all saw multitudes saved. The great doctrinal hymns, which Satan is disposing of today, were born in this era written by the Wesleys, Count Zinzendorf, Fanny Crosby etc.

Faith Missionary Societies sprang up to take the Gospel to every corner of the globe and evangelists reaped a great harvest of souls in every continent. Revivals broke out in Moravia, England, Wales, Ireland and America leaving Bible belts in those regions today. Non-conformist congregations were established everywhere.

The hope of the Lord's return was fervently preached and was the stimulus for worldwide missions. God's plan for Israel and the Church became clear through the preaching of faithful men of God.

The Lord's promise is to **keep this Church from the Tribulation-** *from THE HOUR of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth*" (Rev. 3:10).

THE CHURCH AT LAODICEA - "THE PEOPLE RULE" (REV. 3:14-22)

Practical: The Lord reveals Himself as *"the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God"* to this worldly Church.

No commendation is given. The Lord says, *"I will spue thee out of my mouth"*. This Church is neither cold nor hot. It is materialistic and occupied with earthly riches but God finds it utterly bankrupt, naked, and spiritually blind. The only solution is repentance, or chastening will follow.

To this Church, Christ is standing **OUTSIDE** the door. It does not need Christ to run its program. It is self-sufficient and has *"need of nothing"*. It is a

popular Church and knows nothing of the purifying “*offence of the cross*” (Gal 5:11) which is characteristic of a godly Church.

The Lord’s appeal is not to this Church as a whole, but to **individuals** within it.

“If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.”

The Church had rejected Christ, and God has no choice but to reject the Church as a whole; He appeals to the individual. The godly remnant (overcomers) will reign with Him.

Prophetic: As the meaning of the name suggests, the Laodicean Church period of history has experienced a takeover by human intellect, and no longer does it bow to the Word of God as the final and only authority on matters of faith and conduct. In our day the Church Age is closing in much the same way that Israel finished the period of the Judges;

“Every man did that which was right in his own eyes” (Judges 21:25).

Everything is changed in the last-days Laodicean period of Church history; **the people rule**. Churches have become “big business”. They entertain with rock bands, produce and sell rock music and churches must pay to sing their songs.

Christendom has accumulated enormous wealth and no longer can say like Peter, “*Silver and gold have I none*” (Acts 3:6).

Unscrupulous leaders and so called TV “evangelists” have preached a prosperity gospel and become exceedingly rich as they deceive people with false claims of healing miracles. The Lord warned that in the last days

*“many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not **prophesied** in thy name? and in thy name have **cast out devils**? and in thy name done many **wonderful (miraculous) works**? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity”* (Matt. 7:22-23).

The Laodicean Church is the ecumenical, Charismatic Church which has infiltrated all areas of Christendom and is a last-days demonic invasion speaking in devilish gibberish as foretold by Paul:

*“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to **seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils**; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron”* (1 Tim. 4:1-2).



Early Pentecostals once believed in the Lord's return and studied the Book of Revelation but now some Charismatics refuse even to study Revelation. They are totally preoccupied with running a program that deceives people into looking for signs and wonders and *"with feigned words make merchandise"* of gullible people.

The proliferation of modern versions of the Scripture based on the Westcott and Hort Greek Text of the New Testament using corrupt manuscripts, the acceptance of evolution, theistic and otherwise, the promotion of women in Church leadership; the tolerance of alternative life styles, together with ecumenical inclusivism, all bear testimony to the fact that within Christendom, "the people rule"!

When world Church leaders such as the Lambeth Conference of Anglican Churches, propose that the Church should accept Gay ministers, and Hillsong refuses to oppose Gay Marriage, we are clearly in the last days. The Lord will Rapture the true believers and spue this Laodicean Church out of His mouth!

**SECTION 3 - THE THINGS WHICH SHALL BE HEREAFTER
(CHAPTERS 4 TO 22)**

WE NOW come to FUTURE EVENTS which follow this present Church Age and we will deal with this period as follows:

- i) The Rapture of the Church - Chs. 4 and 5
- ii) The First half of the Tribulation - Chs. 6 to 9
- iii) Events at the Mid-point of the Seven Years - Chs. 10 to 14
- iv) The Second Half of the Tribulation - Chs. 15 to 18
- v) Christ's Second Coming - Ch. 19
- vi) Christ's Millennial Kingdom - Ch. 20
- vii) The New Heaven and New Earth - Chs. 21 and 22

1) THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH (REV. 4:1 TO 5:14)

We have now reached the third section of the Revelation because John sees a door open in heaven and hears a voice saying,

*"Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be **HEREAFTER**"*
(Rev. 4:1).

If John is given a preview of future events beyond this present Church Age, then he would have to **foresee his own Rapture** into the Lord's presence, and what he sees immediately after this would be what he, and every member of the Body of Christ will see as we gather around the throne of God.

The voice he hears is not that of an angel but of the Lord Jesus, *"the Alpha and Omega"*(Rev. 1:8). *"The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout"*(1 Thess. 4:16). The Greek word for "shout" is "κελευσματι", and signifies *"a commanding shout, a shout of incitement"*. The Lord will issue the command, *"Come up hither!"* The same command is given to two **Jewish** prophets who are martyred during the Great Tribulation, and we read:

"They heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud..." (Rev. 11:12).

The Rapture is described elsewhere as follows:

*"The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be **caught up together with them in the clouds** to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord"*
(1 Thess. 4:16-17).

“Behold, a door was opened in heaven... and behold a throne was set in heaven”



“The first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.”

The Rapture of the Church Rev. 4:1-3

To the Corinthians Paul wrote:

*“We shall not all sleep (die), but **we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed**” (1 Cor. 15:51-52).*

The Rapture is described **before** the beginning of the Great Tribulation which commences in Chapter 6. Chapters 4 and 5 describe the scene in heaven as the Church gathers around the Lord at the throne of grace.

After Paul described the Rapture in 1 Thess. 4:13-18 he told them that it would occur **BEFORE the Tribulation**.

*“But of the **times and the seasons**, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that **the day of the Lord** (the Tribulation) so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. **But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief... For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ**” (1 Thess. 5:1-4,9).*

The “wrath” referred to is the wrath of the “*day of the Lord*” which is the Tribulation and the “salvation” mentioned is not the salvation of the soul for these were **already** believers; it was “*the redemption of the purchased possession*”(Eph. 1:14) ie. the body.

In Paul’s second epistle to the Thessalonians he clearly states that the Day of Christ, or the Day of the Lord, “*shall not come, except there come a falling*

away first (*lit. the departure first*), and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition”(2 Thess. 2:3).

The words, “a falling away” should be translated, “*the departure*” which in the context can only refer to **the departure of the Christians at the Rapture** before the “*man of sin*” is revealed. The Christians are indwelt by the Holy Spirit and it is the presence of the Church on earth that hinders the revelation of Antichrist.

(The Greek word is *apostasia* and is the noun form of the verb *aphistemi* which occurs 16 times in the New Testament: 12 times it is a **physical departure**, 2 times it is **departing from truth**, once it is **departing from error**, and once to **depart from a person. It simply means “to depart” and the context determines from what departure takes place**)

Paul further explains:

“He who now hinders will hinder, UNTIL HE be taken out of the way. And THEN shall that Wicked (one) be revealed” (2 Thess. 2:7-8).

In the Gospels, when Jesus spoke to the Jewish disciples **about Israel in the last days**, He told them that the sign that the Tribulation had come would be a sudden global disappearance of people:

“There shall be two in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left” (Luke 17:34-36).

The word “*taken*” in the Greek is *paralambano* meaning “to receive to one’s self”. **It cannot mean taken in judgment.** The word “*left*” means “to put away” and is used of a man putting away his wife in divorce (1 Cor. 7:11).

We have already seen that the promise to the Church at Philadelphia states they will be “*kept from the HOUR of temptation which shall come on all the world*” (Rev. 3:10).

The Church is the Bride of Christ and while on earth Christians are “*espoused*” (engaged) to Christ (2 Cor. 11:2) but the wedding must take place in heaven **BEFORE the Lord returns** at the end of the Tribulation for He “*will return FROM the wedding*” (Luke 12:36) to keep the marriage supper on earth (Rev. 19:9).

All attention is focused on the One who sits upon the throne. He is likened to a jasper and sardine stone - the last and first stones on the high priest’s breastplate. Peter says,

“Unto you therefore which believe he is precious” (1 Pet. 2:7)

Ezekiel saw the same throne:

*“As the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it... it had brightness round about. As the appearance of **the bow** that is in the cloud in the day of rain”*
(Ezek. 1:26-28).

The rainbow which encircles the throne is the token of God’s covenant of mercy to Noah (Gen. 9:13), and indicates that the Church does not come before a throne of judgment as in Rev. 20:11, but to a throne of grace! Before the throne is the crystal sea, and around the throne are four angelic beings, each with six wings, which proclaim the eternal holiness of God. Before the throne are *“seven lamps of fire... which are the seven Spirits of God”* (Rev. 4:5), and *“in the midst of the throne... stood a Lamb as it had been slain”* (Rev. 5:6).

On twenty-four seats (thrones) round about the throne are seated elders with crowns on their heads. These **Jewish elders** are named in 1 Chron. 24:7-18 and were appointed by David to lead the worship in the Temple. They have already been raised from the dead with all the Old Testament saints when Christ rose (Matt. 27:52-53) and they lead the worship of **all the saints** before the throne. Old Testament saints from Adam to Christ included the redeemed from Israel **and** *“every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation”* (Rev. 5:9) from Adam to Moses. They no doubt will exercise a role in the orderly worship of the saints in heaven, just as there were twenty-four courses of priests appointed to lead the worship of Israel (1 Chron. 24:7-19; Luke 1:9,23). In Solomon’s day there were 153,600 Gentiles from every kindred and tribe and nation that worshipped at the Temple (2 Chron. 2:17).

Crowns are rewards for service, and there are many crowns promised to believers. There is the crown of life for martyrs (Rev. 2:10; Jas 1:12), a crown of glory for faithful elders (1 Pet 5:4), a crown of rejoicing for soul-winners (1 Thess 2:19; Phil 4:1), and a crown of righteousness for all who love His appearing (2 Tim. 4:8).

These are incorruptible crowns (1 Cor. 9:25) given at the judgment seat (*bema* seat) of Christ to those who labour for Him. Jesus says,

“Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” (Rev. 3:11).

The Jewish elders have already received their crowns and will *“cast their crowns before the throne”* (Rev. 4:10).

II) THE FIRST HALF OF THE TRIBULATION (REV.6:1 TO 9:21)

John saw a book sealed with seven seals, in the right hand of God, and he wept because no one was found worthy to open and read the book, or even to look on it. Then one of the 24 elders spoke:

*“Weep not: behold the Lion of the tribe of **Juda**, the Root of **David**, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof”* (Rev. 5:5).

When John looked he saw “a Lamb as it had been slain” who came and took the book. Instantly all heaven broke into song, praising the Lamb and proclaiming Him “worthy...to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing” (Rev. 5:12). The Lion of Juda, the Root of David, is the Lamb who bore the wrath of God for all human sin. **The Lord’s Jewish heritage is not forgotten.** He alone can administer judgment. Jesus said,

“The Father...hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man” (John 5:27).

Daniel had “sealed” these judgments (Dan. 12:4,9) till the “time of the end”, and now the Lamb opens each of the seven seals of the Tribulation as follows:

The First Seal: A rider on a **white horse** goes forth conquering and to conquer (Rev. 6:1-2). He has a bow but no arrows, and a crown is given to him. Other Scriptures indicate that as soon as the Church **departs**, the “*man of sin*” will be revealed (2 Thess. 2:3-9). At first this conquest is peaceable and an imitation of Christ’s appearance (Rev. 19:11). Paul wrote of the Day of the Lord,

*“When they shall say, Peace and safety; **then** sudden destruction cometh upon them...”* (1 Thess. 5:3).

It is written of the great antetype of Antichrist, Antiochus Epiphanes, that he would “*by peace...destroy many*” (Dan. 8:25). The Tribulation will begin with a great **peace movement** which will include a seven-year covenant with Israel (Dan 9:27), but he will break the covenant halfway through the seven years. (See Section 2). What we read of the rider on the white horse is consistent with what we read of Antichrist who only **becomes the Beast** halfway through the 7 years of Tribulation.

The Second Seal: A rider on a **red horse** appears and **takes peace from the earth**. A state of anarchy prevails and men kill one another (Rev. 6:3-4). Islamic terrorism has already begun to take peace from the earth and Islamic

migration to all countries is preparing the infrastructure for terror cells on a global basis. When these are armed with weapons of mass destruction such as nuclear, biological and chemical WMD nobody anywhere on earth will be safe. Islamic terrorists care not whether their victims are innocent citizens or military personnel; they care not whether their victims are fellow Muslims or non-Muslims and the death count will amount to **a quarter of world population** when the fourth seal is opened. The religion of Islam glories in killing and martyrdom with promises of special rewards in heaven for martyrs and their families.

The Third Seal: A rider on a **black horse** appears with a pair of balances to measure **basic foods**; this speaks of famine (Rev. 6:5-6). So extensive will be the Islamic terrorism that food production and distribution systems will be completely disrupted and famine will prevail universally. The great cities of the world with millions of people depending on transport systems for their daily food supply will be particularly vulnerable.

The fourth Seal: A rider on a **pale horse** appears with power to kill one quarter of the world's population. If total world population was 8 billion, then this would involve 2 billion deaths! (Rev. 6:7-8). To the second rider is given "*a great sword*"(Rev. 6:4).

The Fifth Seal: When the Rapture occurs many who know the prophetic Scriptures will turn to the Lord. Two Jewish men will be saved and preach at Jerusalem for **1,260 days** until they are slain half-way through the seven years of Tribulation (Rev. 11:3). These are likened to Haggai and Zechariah who were involved in rebuilding the second Temple and are called "*the two olive trees and two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth*" (Rev. 11:4). These will be like Moses and Elijah. They will build the Tribulation Temple and be given miraculous powers. The **emblem of Israel** today has two olive branches and the golden candlesticks!

There will also be 144,000 Jewish young men (Rev. 7:3-4) who will be saved soon after the Rapture and become "*the servants of our God*" to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom "*in all the world for a witness to all nations*"(Matt. 24:14). Many from all nations will turn to Christ through their testimony and become special targets for the terrorists. Many martyrs are seen in heaven praying for vengeance as the fifth seal is opened; they are told to rest for "*a little season*". The Great Tribulation will only be for **a short time** - seven years (Rev. 6:9-11). The two Jewish prophets at Jerusalem are slain after only 1,260 days and all of the 144,000 Jewish "*servants of God*" are seen

around the throne **in heaven** half-way through the Tribulation (Rev. 14:1-5). At the end of the first half of the Tribulation the Russian and Islamic armies will have been decimated and the land of Russia burned but it is during the second half of the Tribulation that God's wrath falls **on the Beast** and all who follow him. God will take vengeance on those who murder His servants. An angel will cry out,

“Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy”
(Rev. 16:5-6).



<p>Zech. 4 Haggi & Zechariah encourage the rebuilding of the Second Temple</p>	<p>Rev. 4 Two future prophets encourage the rebuilding of the Third Temple</p>
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The Sixth Seal: A global earthquake and hailstones will strike the earth. The sun and moon will be darkened and the islands moved. Men will hide in caves and cry for fear of the Day of the Lord, and the wrath of the Lamb (Rev. 6:12-17).

There will be **two global earthquakes** during the seven-year Tribulation; **the first** is at the time of an invasion of Israel by an Islamic army led by Russia (Ezek. 38:19) and **the second** will be at the end of the Tribulation when Christ returns (Zech. 14:4-5). Other local earthquakes will occur also as Jesus indicated (Matt. 24:7)

It will be the Russian/Islamic invasion of Israel that will bring the nation of Israel to the Lord (Ezek. 39:22-29) in the first half of the Tribulation as described by Ezekiel in chapters 38 and 39 of his prophecy and by Joel in chapter 2 of his prophecy. Daniel alludes to this invasion in Dan. 11:44. See Section 4 for details.

The testimony of the 144,000 Jewish witnesses will **make the world aware** that the destruction of the Russian/Islamic armies and the global earthquake are **connected with the conversion of the nation of Israel** to Jesus Christ and that the earthquake is a sign that the “*Day of the Lord*” has come. Men



will seek to hide from “*the wrath of the Lamb*” (Rev. 6:16-17).
 “*So the house of Israel shall know that I am the LORD their God from that day and forward. And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me, therefore hid I my face from them*” (Ezek. 39:22-23).

The Seventh Seal: Seven more judgments are announced with the opening of the seventh seal (Rev. 8:1-2). These are **the seven trumpet judgments** and follow the seal judgments.

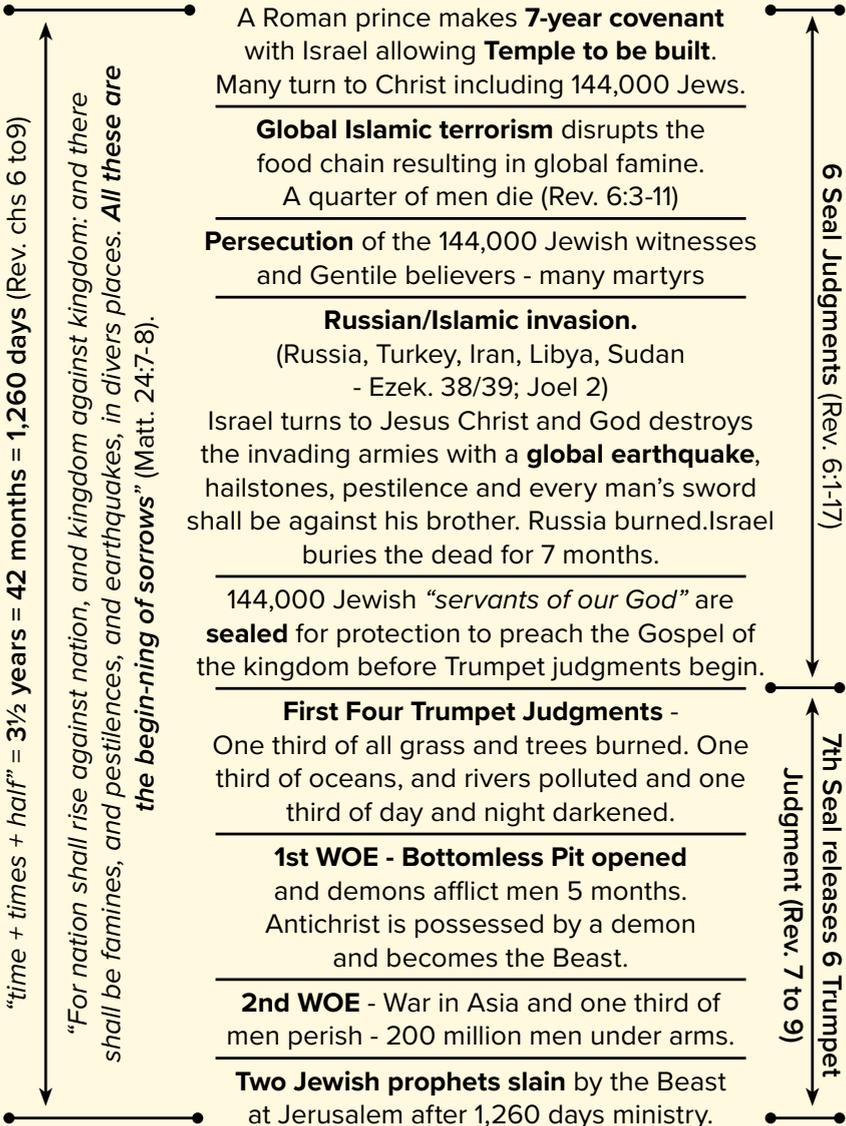
Some have suggested that the Trumpets may simply be the same as the seal judgments in greater detail. However, this cannot be the case because the seventh seal incorporates all of the seven trumpet judgments, and we will see that the seventh trumpet announces yet other judgments - the seven vial (bowl) judgments. The seven seals are followed by the seven trumpets, which in turn are followed by the seven vials which are called “*the seven last plagues*”. **Each of these judgments is therefore in sequence** and become more intense as the Tribulation progresses (Rev. 8:1-6).

SEVEN TRUMPET JUDGMENTS

The following is a brief summary of the next phase of the Tribulation. The first four trumpets are **environmental** judgments affecting one third of the earth; which third is affected, we are not told. The fifth, sixth and seventh trumpets are described as three woes (“*Woe, Woe, Woe, to the inhabitants of the earth*”). The last Woe is the seventh trumpet, which embraces the seven vials (Bowls).

The godless, amoral, Green Movement worships the environment but God will show His authority over the environment as one third of all grass and trees are destroyed, one third of all the seas and rivers are polluted and the days are darkened by one third.

Departure of the Church at the Rapture and Antichrist confirms a 7-year Covenant



Chronology of Events in the First Half of the Tribulation

Revelation chs. 6-9

While these disasters are distracting Antichrist's attention, Israel will be burying the dead for 7 months following the destruction of the Russian/ Islamic invasion (Ezek. 39:11-20). The following is a description of the Trumpet Judgments:

The First Trumpet brings hail, fire and blood, and a third part of all **trees and grass** is burnt up. This will be a global bushfire of gigantic proportions (Rev. 8:7) since there will be no rain in the first half of the Tribulation and the earth will be tinder-dry. The two prophets of God at Jerusalem will prophesy for the first 1,260 days and

"These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will" (Rev. 11:3-6).

The Second Trumpet sounds and a great mountain burning with fire is cast into the sea. **One third of the sea** will be turned to blood. Sea life and ships will be destroyed (Rev. 8:8) perhaps similar, but on a much larger scale than when the island of Krakatoa exploded and disappeared beneath the ocean off the coast of Indonesia in 1883.

The Third Trumpet brings a great star, probably an asteroid, into collision with earth. **One third of all the rivers** and water-systems will be contaminated and many men will die (Rev. 8:10). There is an asteroid belt in our solar system with many thousands of asteroids, some more than 100km diameter. It would only take one of these asteroids to enter earth's atmosphere and it could impact on one third of earth's rivers.

The Fourth Trumpet sounds and **one third of the sun**, moon and stars is smitten. This results in the light during the day and night being shortened by one third. Climatic changes will no doubt occur as a result (Rev. 8:12).

THE 5TH TRUMPET (FIRST WOE)

The judgments are becoming more intense and the last three Trumpet Judgments are each described as a WOE. An angel flies *"through the midst of heaven saying with a loud voice, **Woe, Woe, Woe**, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are **yet to sound**"* (Rev. 8:13).

The Fifth Trumpet sounds and an angel opened the **bottomless pit (Abyss)** which has hitherto been kept sealed. Out of the abyss come what appears to be locusts, yet they are not locusts but imprisoned demonic beings; fallen angels, who *"kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation"* (Jude 6) at

the time of the Flood and were confined in hell as described in 2 Pet. 2:4. Natural locusts

“have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands” (Prov. 30:27).

However, the “*locusts*” from the Bottomless pit **have a king** named “*Abaddon*” (Rev. 9:11) and so they are symbolic of demons.

These demons will have power to afflict any that are not protected by “*the seal of God in their foreheads*” (Rev. 9:4). For a short time Satan will have his full complement of demons prior to his 1,000 years in the Bottomless Pit (Rev. 9:1-12).

It is said that the Beast arises from the Bottomless Pit (Rev. 11:7;17:8) and it is probable that at this time Antichrist will be demon-possessed by *Abaddon* and thereafter be described as the Beast.

THE 6TH TRUMPET (SECOND WOE)

The Sixth Trumpet assembles the largest armies ever seen on earth numbering 200 million to slay **one third of mankind**. Today, North Korea is developing nuclear weapons and missiles. South Korea, India, China, Japan and Pakistan are arming and the potential for a massive Asian conflict exists. It is hard to see how such a vast loss of life could be experienced without weapons of mass destruction.

The Asian conflict is demonically organised for **an hour and a day and a month and a year**. Twice in the book of Revelation, the River Euphrates is mentioned; it is the boundary of the Middle East and **Asia** where more than half the world’s population is located. Asia is the only place where armies numbering 200 million would be feasible. The sixth Trumpet may well signal **an Asian war** where idolatrous Hindu and Buddhist religions are dominant. When Islam is destroyed in the Seal Judgments there is no mention of idolatry but after this conflict men “*repented not of...worship of devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone and wood*”(Rev. 9:20). The 2nd Woe (6th Trumpet) brings the first half of the Tribulation to a conclusion and we read:

“The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly. And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever” (Rev. 11:14-15).

When the seventh Trumpet Judgment is announced the 3rd Woe will begin and the “*seven last plagues*” of the Tribulation will follow after which Christ

will establish His kingdom on earth in place of the kingdoms of men but before the second half of the Tribulation begins we should pause to consider the major events occurring **at the mid-point of the 7 years.**

It is of the utmost importance to recognise that the Book of Revelation is a chronological outline of events that will occur in the future. John is foreseeing these future events as they occur.

It takes five chapters to describe events occurring at the mid-point of the Tribulation; chs. 10 to 14. The major events at this time are shown in the chart on the next page.

Russia & Islam Destroyed, Israel Saved, Antichrist Demon possessed from the Abyss

Seven thunder judgments are sealed up and an angel declares there “*should be **delay no longer***”.

Antichrist causes **Jewish sacrifices to cease** in the Temple and places his image there -
“*the abomination of desolation*”.

There is **war in heaven** and Michael and his angels cast the Dragon (Satan) and his angels into the earth.

The two Jewish prophets slain by the Beast in Jerusalem are raised and **caught up to heaven** after 3½ days.

Israel flees from Jerusalem helped by a nation with “*two wings of a great eagle*” - possibly the United States.

The 144,000 Jewish servants of God appear **before the throne** in heaven. Israel’s testimony on earth silenced.

Angels flying through the heavens **proclaim the “Everlasting Gospel”** & warn of imminent wrath and Great Tribulation.

An **assassination attempt** is made on the Beast and his “*deadly*” wound by a sword to the head is healed.

The Lord and angels prepare to **reap the harvest** of earth and to cast the nations into the winepress of the wrath of God.

An angel warns not to receive the **mark of the Beast**. Better to die “*in the Lord*” than be tormented for ever in the lake of fire.

18 Events Occurring at the Mid-point of the Tribulation
Revelation chs. 10-14

**EVENTS AT THE MID-POINT
OF THE SEVEN YEARS - CHS. 10 TO 14**

The chart on page 180 summarises the events occurring at the mid-point of the seven years. At this stage Russia and Islam will have been removed as a force in the world; world population will be more than halved; the Asian nations will be recovering from awful warfare and many cities will be struggling to rebuild after earthquakes. Disease will be everywhere with little chance of medical help and food supplies will be short. Shipping will be disrupted and **the world will be ready to accept anyone** who can offer hope. It is at this stage that Satanic deception will bring the world under the control of the Beast (Rev. 13:1-10) who will be the head of the revived Roman Empire and his Foreign Affairs minister, the False Prophet (Rev. 13:11-17) .

At this time Satan is cast out of heaven (Rev. 12:7-12) and will come down *“with great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time”* (Rev. 12:12). Everything about the second half of the Tribulation is **demonically** inspired. The Dragon (Satan), the Beast (Antichrist), and the False Prophet will become a **trinity of evil** determined to destroy everything that savours of the Living God.

At this point in time **Israel** is described as *“the seed”* of the woman with a crown of 12 stars (Rev. 12:1). As seen in the dream of Joseph, the 12 sons of Israel were 12 stars (Gen. 37:5-10). The woman (Israel) gave birth to Christ, the *“man child”* whom the Devil sought to destroy at His birth, but who was caught up to heaven, to God’s throne, after He rose from the dead.

The woman’s seed (descendants) will be those who *“keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ”* (Rev. 12:17). Israel will have turned to Christ before the middle of the Tribulation and will be persecuted by the Beast.

The two Jewish prophets at Jerusalem will be slain (Rev. 11:7-8) and the 144,000 Jewish *“servants of our (Israel’s) God”* will be seen around the throne in heaven; human testimony will be silenced and angels will declare the Everlasting Gospel from heaven (Rev. 14:6-12). Israel will fight for survival (Zech. 12:1-14) and will be sustained by a nation described as having two wings of a great eagle; possibly America (Rev. 12:14; Ezek. 17).

The 7th Trumpet Announces 7 “last plagues”

“time + times + half” = 3½ years = 42 months = 1,260 days (Rev. chs 16 to 18)

“Then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened (Matt. 24:21-22).”

• The Beast given sovereign power by Satan and the **ten kings** of the Revived Roman Empire (EU).

Men worship the Beast, his image, and Satan who gives power to the Beast.

Seven angels appear with seven Vials (Bowls) which are the “*seven last plagues*” principally directed at the Beast and his followers.

The first Vial causes a “*grievous sore*” to come on all **who worship the Beast**. The fifth Vial brings “*darkness*” to **the kingdom of the Beast** ie. the revived Roman Empire.

Judgments that fell on one third of earth in the first half of the Tribulation now become global polluting the sea and the rivers and scorching heat waves

Israel will be protected in a place prepared of God and nourished by a nation described as having two wings of a great eagle - the USA?

Israel will be fighting for survival and since they are trusting God will be like “*a hearth of fire among the wood*” and “*a torch of fire in a sheaf*” among neighbouring nations (Zech. 12:6).

The 10 kings will burn *Mystery Babylon (Vatican)* at Rome

The Beast will use demonic powers to gather “*all nations*” against Jerusalem, to the battle of Armageddon.

Christ comes with His Bride to the Mt. of Olives and smites the nations. **A second global earthquake** as the Beast and False Prophet are slain and cast into the lake of fire.

7th Trumpet releases Seven Vial (Bowl) Judgments (Rev. 16 to 18)

Chronology of Events in the Second Half of the Tribulation
Revelation chs. 15-19

THE SECOND HALF OF THE TRIBULATION - REV. 15 TO 18

Everything about the second half of the 7 years of Tribulation is tainted with **Satanic activity**. It can truly be said that the last 1,260 days will be “hell on earth”.

The demons from the Bottomless Pit will be attacking all people with the mark of the beast and all the demons that followed Satan will have lost their place in heaven and come to earth “*having great wrath*”(Rev. 12:12). The Beast will be demon possessed and receive power from Satan (Rev. 13:4); the False Prophet will perform miracles by demonic power in order to deceive the nations causing them to worship the Beast while three “*unclean spirits*” *like frogs*”(Rev. 16:13-14) will come out of the mouth of the Dragon (Satan), the Beast, and the False Prophet, to gather all the kings of the earth to the battle of Armageddon.

Mystery Babylon (Christendom) will come into judgment and is described as “*the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird*” (Rev. 18:2).

It is the severity of the second half of the Tribulation that caused Jesus to say, “*then shall be great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world*” (Matt. 24:21). The entire 7 years is the wrath of God but it becomes more intense after 42 months.

The events of the last 42 months are described on the adjoining page.

THIRD WOE

THE SEVENTH TRUMPET = SEVEN VIAL JUDGMENTS

There are only **three Woes** and the last Woe is the **seventh Trumpet which embraces the seven Vial Judgments** - “*the seven last plagues*”. Before the first Woe we read that John saw

*“an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, **Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth** by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, **which are yet to sound!**”* (Rev. 8:13).

Some have taught that the **wrath of God** is not poured out until the Vial Judgments and that the Church will have to endure the first half of the 7 years of Tribulation, but **two of the Woes occur before the Mid-point** of the seven years and God’s wrath is also poured out on the Russian/Islamic armies early in the seven years. In Ezek. 38:18-19 God says: “***My fury shall come up in my face. For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken.***”

The pre-wrath theory teaches that the Rapture occurs half-way through the seven years. It is unscriptural: the **entire 7 years is Israel's 70th "week"**; it is the "*time of Jacob's trouble*" (Jer. 30:7). The Departure of the Church which is "*neither Jew nor Greek ...but all one in Christ Jesus*" must occur before the 7 years begins. All Israel turns to the Lord in the first half of the Tribulation and if the Church was still here every Jew would become a part of the Church and be raptured leaving no Jews to greet the Lord when he returns!

The Vial judgments are described as "*the seven last plagues*" (Rev. 15:1; 21:9) and they bring us to the **second 3¹/₂ years of the Tribulation**. The conflict of the first 1,260 days involves Islamic terror and an Islamic invasion of Israel but in the second half of the Tribulation Antichrist (the Beast) takes centre stage. The Beast begins as the peaceful political leader of the revived Roman Empire (EU) but at the mid-point of the seven years, after the Bottomless Pit is opened, he becomes demon possessed and thereafter is identified as the Beast.

The revived Roman Empire will be divided into 10 kingdoms at or before the mid-point of the Tribulation and these will surrender their power and authority to the Beast (Rev. 17:13); Antichrist probably is possessed by Abaddon, the King of the demons from the Bottomless Pit and for this reason can be described as the Beast that "*ascendeth out of the bottomless pit*" (Rev. 11:7; 17:8).

The Vial judgments are especially directed **against the Beast and his kingdom** since he, with the Dragon (Satan), and the False Prophet will have formed a Trinity of evil to fight against Christ.

The First Vial: A grievous sore comes on all **who have the mark of the beast** or worship his image (Rev. 16:2). This will be a global pestilence.

The Second Vial: The **sea** will turn to blood and every living soul in the sea will die (Rev. 16:3). Seafood will be cut off and shipping will be stopped.

The Third Vial: The **rivers** and drinking water are turned into blood as punishment for shedding the blood of saints (Rev. 16:4-7). Without drinking waters millions will perish.

The Fourth Vial: The **sun** is judged and men are scorched with great heat yet do not repent (Rev. 16:8-9). Extreme **heatwave conditions** will be experienced and with power supplies disrupted no relief will be possible from airconditioning.

The Fifth Vial: The **kingdom of the Beast** will be filled with **darkness and**

disease yet they do not repent (Rev. 16:10-11). Men will gnaw their tongues for pain.

The Sixth Vial: The great river Euphrates will dry up to allow the armies of the “*Kings of the East*” to come to Armageddon (Rev. 16:12-16). The Euphrates and Tigris rivers are already dammed in Turkey and with drought conditions prevailing it will be easy to see how remaining water supplies will be cut off.

The Seventh Vial: The second **global earthquake** will flatten the cities of the nations and **Mystery Babylon** will be judged (Rev. 16:17-21; ch17 & ch18). This earthquake will exceed all other earthquakes; It will be “*such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found*” (Rev. 16:18-20).

The prophet Zechariah also described this earthquake:

“The mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee” (Zech. 14:4-5).

ARMAGEDDON

The second half of the Tribulation is a conflict between God and Satan. Satan’s aim will be to destroy Israel and all who stand with them.

The Vial judgments are therefore directed against the Beast, his kingdom, and those who receive his mark. How the Beast will deceive the nations to send their armies to Jerusalem to resist the Lord at His coming is clear; it will be “*by the means of those miracles*” which the False Prophet performs. Three “*unclean spirits*” will be sent to deceive the kings of the earth; they are “*the spirits of devils working miracles*” (Rev. 16:14). Great demonic deception will be needed to convince men that earthly weapons can prevail against the Son of God from heaven. The **Charismatic movement, with its false claims of miracles, is preparing the world for this deception.**

The Antichrist’s army will have dark spiritual powers fighting on their side though only one third of the angels followed Satan.

The Beast and all his followers will be desperate and angry for in chapter 14 an angel of God declared their doom in the lake of fire. Satan himself, knows that he is to be bound in the bottomless pit and that he has but a short time. Just as Islamic terrorists have no concern for their own safety, the Beast's armies will do likewise and the blood will flow to the horses bridles up to a distance of 1,600 furlongs and the birds of the air will feast on the vast number of dead bodies. The Roman furlong was 607 feet and that makes the total distance of 1,600 furlongs equal to 183 miles or the distance from Galilee to Beersheba.

The depth of blood will be to the horses bridle (Rev. 14:20) over a distance of 183 miles, not continuously but within that distance blood will run to about four feet deep. There is no continuous valley or river for a distance of 184 miles (300km) from Galilee in the north to Beersheba in the south for the blood to be a continuous stream.

The human body contains about 5 litres of blood and a horse about 50 litres so the number of men and animals would need to be very large. Should the bodies be cast into the stream of blood, which is most likely, then the volume of blood required to raise the level to four feet would be reduced. If the army that comes to Armageddon from the "*kings of the east*" is anything like the 200-million-man Asian army assembled at the 5th Trumpet Judgment "*for to slay the third part of men*" (Rev. 9:15), and if they muster 10 million horses, the total amount of blood would be 1.5 billion litres.

During the Korean war the Chinese and North Koreans adopted "human wave" methods with no regard for how many died; they climbed over the dead bodies that piled up on the battlefield and were mowed down.

Armageddon means "*hill of Megiddo*" which is located near to Haifa on the coast and overlooks a wide valley called the Valley of Jezreel running from the coast in a south-easterly direction to Jezreel. The Kishon River follows the valley. When Napoleon saw this valley he said it was the perfect place for the battle of Armageddon.

But the Jezreel valley will not be the only place where the final conflict will rage for we know that Jerusalem on the mountains of Judea will be attacked (Zech. 14:2) and Joel 3:2 states that all nations will be gathered to the "*Valley of Jehoshaphat*" which is south-east of Jerusalem running down to En-Gedi on the Dead Sea coast.

There can be no doubt that the final conflict will cover the **entire land of**

Israel and the number of combatants will be numbered in the many millions, all seeking to wipe out the remnant of Israel. The miracle of it all is that Israel will survive because the Lord will fight for His people (Zech. 12:9; 14:3).

Zechariah indicates that the Jews will have incredible success in this battle. This will be a real David and Goliath battle. Even the most “*feeble*” of them will be like David who slew his 10,000s and the house of David will be like “*the angel of the Lord*” who slew 185,000 in one night! The Governors of Judah will be like a “*fire in a sheaf*” (Zech. 12:6) among their enemies. (Zech. 12:3-9).

We should remember that this is a physical battle and weapons are physical weapons though God will strike their enemies with **blindness and madness** (Zech. 12:4). Israel will have weapons stored for this battle. No doubt they will have all the weapons **left by the Russians and Muslims** in the first half of the Tribulation and it is reported Israel has 200 nuclear weapons of her own. Many Israeli weapons are the best in the world and every boy and girl is militarily trained so even if two thirds perish based on the population at the end of 2016, they would have 2. 1 million left and if only half are trained to fight, that means they would have a million soldiers.

In 2016 Israel had 160,000 active frontline personnel, 630,000 active reserve personnel and 3 million who were classified as “fit for service”.

We know that horses will be used possibly because fuel supplies will run out but God will “*smite every horse with astonishment* (literally *bewilderment*)... and will smite every horse of the people with **blindness**” (Zech. 12:4).

Joel describes the battle of Armageddon as

“**Multitude, multitudes** in the valley of decision: for the Day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision” (Joel 3:14).

In addition, God will send the greatest earthquake of all time (Rev. 16:18) to disrupt the enemy; “*the sun and moon shall be darkened...and the heavens and earth shall shake*” (Joel 3:15-16). Confusion will reign and if the battle follows Israel’s previous experience, the enemies of the Lord will turn on each other; “*every man’s sword shall be against his brother*”. The Lord did it for Gideon against the Midianites (Judges 7:22); He did it for Jonathan against the Philistines (1 Sam. 14:20) and He will do it when Russia and Islam invade Israel in the Tribulation (Ezek. 38:21).

But just as Israel’s enemies capture half of Jerusalem (Zech. 14:2) the Lord will appear and by the sword of His mouth He will destroy the enemies.

MYSTERY BABYLON IDENTIFIED - REV.CH. 17

Two whole chapters are devoted to the destruction of “*MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH*” (Rev. 17:5) - Who is she?

This harlot woman is riding the Beast who we have seen is the Antichrist as the head of the **revived Roman Empire** and she is identified by ten characteristics:

- 1) She sits on seven hills (Rev. 17:9). Rome is the city of seven hills.
- 2) She was “*that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth*” (Rev. 17:18). Rome was reigning over the nations in AD96.
- 3) The harlot is political, committing fornication “*with the kings of the earth*” (Rev. 17:2). The Vatican is a political State.
- 4) The harlot is international and “*sits upon many waters*” (Rev. 17:1) which are “*peoples, multitudes, and nations, and tongues*” (Rev. 17:5). The Vatican is international.
- 5) The harlot rides the Beast (Rev. 17:3). The Vatican has guided the revived Roman Empire to power through the 1958 *Treaty of Rome* and subsequent Treaties.



From an article on the EU in *Time Magazine* 9 December, 1991

- 6) The harlot wears purple and scarlet (Rev. 17:4). The cardinals and bishops of the Vatican wear scarlet and purple.
- 7) The harlot is exceedingly rich through her political connections (Rev. 17:4). The Vatican is so rich in gold, artworks, real estate and Banks etc. that her wealth cannot be determined.
- 8) The harlot has a golden cup in her hand full of fornication (Rev. 17:4). The central doctrine of the Vatican is the Mass which is always a golden cup or a silver cup gold plated. Idolatry is spiritual fornication (Ezek.ch. 16) and the Mass is an idolatrous sacrifice. Catholic Churches are full of images.
- 9) The Harlot is drunk with the “*blood of the martyrs of Jesus*” (Rev. 17:6). The Vatican has slain, burned, and otherwise murdered untold thousands of Bible-believing Christians through the exercise of secular power; by inquisitions and Crusades.

10) The harlot is located close the sea coast. Rome extends to the coast well in view of ships captains (Rev. 18:17-18).

Idolatry began at Babylon with the Tower of Babel and has spread to all countries. In Greece and Egypt, the Babylonian gods were worshipped under different names. The Vatican promotes the worship of the “mother and child”, the Virgin Mary and the child Jesus, which actually perpetuates the worship of Semiramis, the wife of Nimrod who was called “the Queen of Heaven”; she is depicted as a mother with a child. Jeremiah rebuked the Jews for worshipping the “*Queen of Heaven*” (Jer. 7:18; 44:17-25) yet Catholics continue to worship Mary as the “Queen of Heaven”.

Why is Mystery Babylon called the “**mother**” of harlots? She creates more and more gods every time she makes another deceased priest or nun into a “saint”, to be prayed to and worshipped. It is impossible to quantify exactly how many “saints” there are, but some estimates have the number exceeding 10,000. On 12 May 2013, the day after Pope Benedict XVI resigned, the Catholic Church canonised 802 more saints to whom Catholics will pray. The Church may not call them gods but they are no different to the gods of Babylon, Greece or pagan Rome. Catholics bow before their images and seek favours from them.

God will bring disunity between the Vatican and the ten kings that give their power to the Beast and

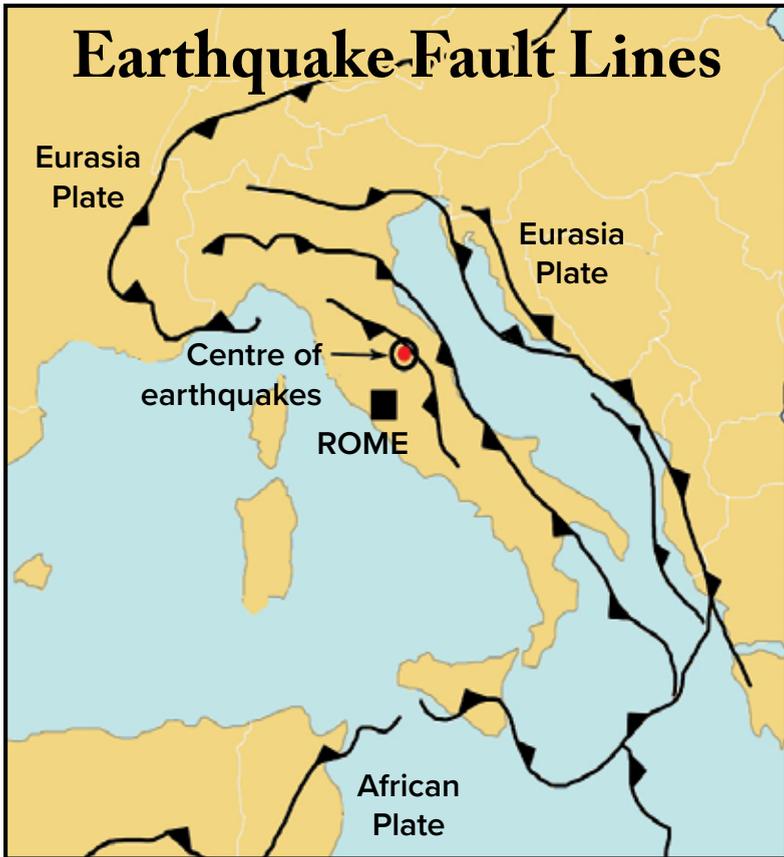
“these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire” (Rev. 17:16).

*“And... there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. **And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath*** (Rev. 16:18-19).

The true Church is espoused as a “*chaste virgin to Christ*”; the apostate church is a harlot.

THE CHASTE BRIDE OF CHRIST ON DISPLAY - REV. 19:7-10

Not only does heaven rejoice over the destruction of the harlot who has blasphemously called herself the bride of Christ, but praise continues as the true Bride of Christ is displayed in “*fine linen, clean and white*” which is “*the righteousness(es) of the saints*” or the “***righteous acts of the saints***”. The Greek text in this verse has a **plural** righteousness signifying that the imputed



righteousness of Christ is not in view here but the righteous acts of believers is the subject. Christ will be “*admired in all them that believe*” (2 Thess. 1:10) for their obedience to Christ (1 Cor. 4:5; 3:8).

Every faithful service done for Christ will be **rewarded** at the Judgment Seat of Christ and will be displayed to the glory of Christ in that day when Christ will come “*to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe*” (2 Thess. 1:10).

There will be differing rewards for the saints but none will boast; no resurrected saint will possess a sinful nature. In absolute perfection, made possible through the precious blood of Christ, every saint will glorify Christ for His grace and mercy which “*endureth for ever*”. Crowns of reward will all redound to the praise and glory of the King of kings and Lord of lords who will be adorned with “*many crowns*” (Rev. 19:12).

HEAVEN OPENED - "WHEN THE LORD JESUS SHALL BE REVEALED FROM HEAVEN..." (2 THESS. 1:7)

In chapter 4 a door is opened to receive the Church but at the end of the Tribulation **heaven will be opened** and Christ will come with all the armies of heaven and "*all His saints*" (1 Thess. 3:13).

The Second Advent is to **bring judgment** for the Lord comes "*to judge and make war*" (Rev. 19:11) and He comes

"in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. 1:8).

It will be too late to seek mercy when Christ returns. It is a commonly held view that Israel will turn to the Lord when they see Christ at the second advent but this is impossible. The Jews will mourn when they see Christ but that will be **as a saved nation** when they remember the centuries of rejection. Neither Jew nor Gentile can be saved as the Lord returns for as the psalmist wrote:

"Before the LORD; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall He judge the world, and the people with equity" (Ps. 98:9).

The Second Advent of Christ is the climax of the age and the beginning of the Kingdom of God on earth. There are at least 23 scriptures throughout the Old and New Testaments that specifically speak of the Lord's glorious coming to earth. They are:

Matt. 16:28; 24:29-31; Mark 13:24-27; Luke 17:24; 21:25-27; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; 2:8; Ps. 96:13; 97:1-6; 98:9; Dan. 2:44-45; 7:13-14; Isa. 24:21-23; 26:21; 59:20; 63:1; 66:15; Joel 3:12-17; Zech. 14:1-4; Titus 2:13; James 5:7; Rev. 19:11-21.

The Purpose of Christ's coming to earth is clear:

- 1) He comes to judge the nations Ps. 96:18; 97:1-6; 98:9.
- 2) He comes to destroy Antichrist and all who war against the Lamb. Rev. 19:18-21; Isa. 24:21-23.
- 3) He comes to take vengeance against those who persecute believers Rev. 6:10-11; Isa. 63:16. Heb. 10:30-31

"Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

"The day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come" (Isa. 63:4).

- 4) He comes to rescue His people Israel Joel 3:12-17; Zech. 14:2-3.
- 5) He comes to display His Bride after the wedding. Luke 12:36; Rev. 19:7-8; 2 Thess. 1:10.
- 6) He comes to reign over the earth 1,000 years Rev. 20:4-6; Zech. 14:9; Joel 3:17; Dan. 7:27.
- 7) He comes to bind Satan and his demons Rev. 20:1-3; Isa. 24:21.
- 8) He comes to judge the living nations that survive the Tribulation (Matt. 25:31-46).

SORTING OUT THE SURVIVORS OF THE TRIBULATION - REV.CH. 20

Revelation chapter 20 indicates that Christ's kingdom on earth after His return will last for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:2,3,4, 5, 6,7) but who will enter the kingdom? To find the answer to this question we must go to Matthew's Gospel.

The first thing the Lord will do when He returns to earth is to

“send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect (Israel) from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other”
(Matt. 24:31).

God's elect (chosen) nation is Israel who have stood for Christ in the Tribulation - they have the *“testimony of Jesus Christ”* (Rev. 12:17). Every Jew will be a believer (Rom. 11:26) and every Jew will return to the land (Ezek. 39:28). They will come in ships and planes (Isa. 60:8-9) and on land. Then the Lord will set up His judgment throne, the *“throne of His glory”* (Matt. 25:31) *“and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats”* (Matt. 25:32).

The goats will be those who followed Antichrist and these will go away into *“everlasting fire”* i.e. to the lake of fire, but the sheep (saved Gentiles), those who stood with the redeemed Israel during the Tribulation will hear the words,

“Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (Matt. 25:34).

At the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom every living soul on earth will be a saved person! It will not be until babies are born and come to the age of understanding that there could be any rebellion against the King of kings.

The parable of the wheat and tares teaches the same message that at the *“end*

of the age” the tares (unsaved from the Tribulation) will be cast into the fire but the wheat will be gathered into the kingdom (Matt. 13:30). Likewise the parable of the net; the bad fish will be cast away into *“the furnace of fire”* while the good fish are gathered into vessels (Matt. 13:49-50). These parables were spoken to Israel before the Church was formed.

THE MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB

The **wedding** of Christ and His Church takes place in heaven for His second advent is *“after the wedding”* (Luke 12:36) but the **marriage supper will be on earth**, and the guests will be Israel with all the *“blessed”* who survive the Tribulation; these are the *“sheep”* who come before the *“throne of His glory”* (Matt. 25:31-34). These, Jesus said are those *“blessed of my Father”* who will inherit the millennial kingdom (Matt. 25:33).

“Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb”
(Rev. 19:9).

There are other Scriptures that speak of Christ and His wedding. The parable of the 10 virgins was given to **Jewish** disciples **before the Church even existed**. The bride is not mentioned in the parable for the virgins who are those prepared and unprepared for Christ when He comes for His bride. It is given to Israel as **a warning of the end of the age** which begins at the Rapture and ends when Christ comes in glory with His bride. Many Jews will be unprepared for *“the end of the age”* when the wedding takes place in heaven.

The parable of the marriage supper for the King’s Son was prophetic of the nation of Israel. Invitations were sent out but those who were invited *“made light of it”* and entreated the King’s servants *“spitefully and slew them”* (Matt. 22:5-6). The King *“was wroth: and he sent forth his armies...and burned up their city”* (Matt. 22:7).

Israel has been invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb but they rejected the invitation so God sent the Romans to destroy their city, Jerusalem in AD70. Since then the invitation has gone out to all who will respond and honour the King’s Son.

During this Church age God is taking out from the Gentiles *“a people for His name”* (Acts 15:14) and this people will be the *“wife of the Lamb”* but during the Tribulation the invitation will go out to attend the *“marriage supper of the Lamb”* **as guests**; only those who respond to the invitation will be blessed at the marriage supper and in His kingdom.

John the Baptist was an Old Testament saint but saw himself as only “*a friend of the bridegroom*” (John 3:29).

JOY AND SORROW AT CHRIST'S RETURN

Christ will be welcomed by Israel since Israel will have turned to the Lord.

“And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation” (Isa. 25:9).

However, Israel will recall the years they rejected Messiah and how they crucified Him:

*“I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall **look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him**, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is **in bitterness** for his firstborn. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon...”* (Zech. 12:10-14).

It will be like the lamenting after the death of Josiah when he was slain by Pharaoh-necho at Megiddo as recorded in 2 Chron. 35:24-25.

*“Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and **they also which pierced him**: and **all kindreds of the earth shall wail** because of him. Even so, Amen”* (Rev. 1:7).

*“And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and **then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn (wail)**, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds”* (Matt. 24:30).

Some will wail because the hour of judgment has come but others will wail because they remember the days of rejection before they repented. After the judgment of the living nations those that are cast into “*everlasting fire*” (Matt. 25:41) will be filled with remorse.

*“So shall it be at the **end of the world (age)**: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: **there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth**”* (Matt. 13:49-50).

ANGELS AT THE SECOND ADVENT OF CHRIST

A number of Scriptures speak of angels at the second advent. At the mid-point of the Tribulation the angels that are associated with Michael will fight with the Devil and his angels but when the Lord returns the angels will not need to fight for the Lord will execute judgment personally with a sharp sword “*that proceeds out of His mouth*” (Rev. 19:15,21) which simply means

that He will only need to speak and His enemies will be destroyed.

Creation took place in and instant at the word of the Lord as Psalm 33:8-9 states; judgment will likewise:

*“Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For **he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.**”*

Isaiah prophesied of the second advent:

*“I have trodden the winepress **alone; and of the people there was none with me:** for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury... I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that **there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me**” (Isa. 63:3-5).*

Nevertheless, there will be millions of holy angels with Christ to witness His second advent. Paul wrote that Christ would come *“from heaven **with his mighty angels**”*(2 Thess. 1:7) *“in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God”*(2 Thess. 1:8).

How many angels are there? *“Ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands”*(Rev. 5:11) - one hundred million plus millions more.

KING OF KINGS

The Lord comes wearing *“many crowns”* (*diadema*). This word in the Greek original only occurs three times. A different Greek word is used in all other places; it is *stephanos* meaning a laurel or wreath such as is given to victors at games. The *“crown of thorns”* was a victor’s laurel. A kingly, royal, crown is a *diadema*:

- i)** The Dragon, Satan, has seven heads and seven *diadema* (Rev. 12:3).
- ii)** The Beast has seven heads and seven *diadema* (Rev. 13:1).
- iii)** Christ has many *diadema* (Rev. 19:12) and He is *“King of kings”*.

Zechariah states that *“the LORD shall be king over all the earth”* (Zech. 14:9) so for the Lord to be **King of kings** and wear many royal crowns there must be nations and kings for the Lord to reign over, and since He is king over *“all the earth”* the kings must be earthly kings. In other words Christ returns to set up an **earthly** kingdom.

THE JUDGMENT OF THE BEAST

Satan and the Beast will be fully aware that Christ will be returning and will know the time because at the mid-point of the Tribulation *“he knows that he has but a short time”* (Rev. 12:12); 42 months, and they so hate Christ they prepare to fight.

When Christ returns the beast will have gathered all the kings of the earth to fight against Christ at His coming; *“to make war against Him...and His army”* (Rev. 19:19). The Beast will have supernatural powers from Satan but he is no match for Christ.

The Beast and the False Prophet will be *“taken”* and cast into the lake of fire. The word translated *“taken”* is interesting; it appears 13 times in the New Testament; six times it is used when the Jews wanted to **arrest** the Lord forceably; three times it is used of **fish caught** in a net (John 21:3,10); once when Peter was apprehended and put in prison (Acts 12:4); once when the Governor of Damascus would have apprehended Paul and once when Peter took the right hand of the crippled man at the Temple and lifted him up. From these scriptures it is clear that the Beast and False Prophet will be arrested (seized). It won't be a gentle treatment but forcible by mighty angels who will **take hold** of them and cast them into the lake of fire.

Jesus described the events at this time:

*“So shall it be at the end of the age: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be **wailing and gnashing of teeth**”* (Matt. 13:49-50).

We can understand why they will wail but why *gnash their teeth*? When the Jews stoned Stephen we read:

*“When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and **they gnashed on him with their teeth**”* (Acts 7:54).

People don't gnash with their teeth in sorrow but **in furious anger**. Antichrist and his followers will not be sorry for their rebellion against Christ; they will go to the lake of fire full of hatred, fuming at the Lord Jesus. They will wail with remorse because of the torment of the lake of fire but their hearts will be unchanged in the Lake of Fire.

The rich man in hades was concerned for his five brothers still on earth (Luke 16:27-28) but those who follow the Beast will be Satan worshippers, **set against Christ**. The seven times Jesus spoke of *“weeping and gnashing of teeth”* it was said in the context of the **judgment of the nations** at the *“end of the age”* (Matt. 8:12; 13:42,50; 22:32; 24:51; 25:30; Luke 13:28).

The issues in the Tribulation will be so clear: The Rapture and the testimony of 144,000 Jews; the amazing conversion of Israel; the destruction of the Russian/Islamic forces by the power of God and the testimony of the angel flying through the heavens proclaiming the *“everlasting Gospel”*. Anyone

who follows the Beast and worships the Devil will have blasphemed the Holy Ghost.

When God destroyed the Russian/Islamic army the kings of the earth **fear** the “*wrath of the Lamb*” and seek to hide (Rev. 6:16) but at the end of the Tribulation the kings join the beast to fight Christ! Such will be his powers of deception.

ANTICHRIST TAKEN DEAD OR ALIVE?

Daniel states that Antichrist will be “*slain and cast into the burning flame*” (Dan 7:11) but John states that he will be cast “*alive*” into a lake of fire (Rev. 19:20). How can this be?

We need to distinguish between *hades* and the *lake of fire*. At the end of the 1,000-years millennial kingdom Satan will be cast alive into the lake of fire “*where the Beast and the False Prophet ARE*” (Rev. 20:10).

Hades is the place where unsaved souls are remanded to await the second resurrection to damnation (John 5:29) after which they are cast into the lake of fire, so before any person can go to the lake of fire they **must have a resurrection body**. Therefore when the Beast is slain and cast **alive** into the lake of fire, he must of necessity **die** and then receive his **resurrection body** at the coming of the Lord and this explains Daniel’s prophecy:

“And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt” (Dan. 12:2).

The Tribulation **martyrs** will be raised “*to everlasting life*” at the coming of the Lord (Rev. 20:4) but the Beast and his False Prophet with all who follow them, will be slain and get their resurrection bodies to be cast into the lake of fire.

Thus the beast can be both **slain and cast alive** into the lake of fire. Matthew tells us that, at the judgment of the living nations after the Lord returns, the goats will be cast into “*everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels*” (Matt. 25:41). It is into the lake of fire that Satan is cast at the end of the 1,000 years..

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HADES AND GEHENNA

It is important to distinguish between *hades* (hell) and the lake of fire (*gehenna*). In the KJV Bible two different Greek words are translated “*hell*”; *hades and gehenna*.

Hades is where the souls of the unsaved go after death to await the resurrection to damnation at the Great White Throne (Rev. 20:11-15).

Gehenna is where the resurrected unsaved are cast **after receiving judgment** at the Great White Throne; it is also called the “*lake of fire*” or “*everlasting fire*”.

The Greek word *gehenna* literally means “the valley of Hinnom”. Hinnom was a Jebusite and the valley of Hinnom was “*at the end of the valley of the giants*” (Josh. 15:8; 18:16). The giants were the offspring of fallen angels that co-habited with women.

It was in this valley that *Tophet* was located where King Ahaz and King Manasseh burned their sons and daughters to Molech (2 Chron. 33:6). Josiah defiled the area when he became king (2 Kings 23:10).

Unger’s Dictionary states that *Tophet* means “drums” and is so named because drums were beaten to drown out the cries of children as they were burned alive. *Strong’s Hebrew Dictionary* confirms that *Tophet* is the same as the word meaning “tabret or drums”.

Jeremiah lamented the fact that Israel had burned their children in the fire in the valley of Hinnom (Jer. 7:31; 32:35) and indicated that it was for this reason God would send the Babylonians to destroy Jerusalem and fill the valley of Hinnom with bodies “*till there be no place*” (Jer. 7:32); it would be called the “*valley of slaughter*”.

The Greek word *Gehenna*, is used in the following scriptures: Matt. 5:22,29-30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15,33; Mark 9:43,45,47; Luke 12:5; James 3:6 where we observe that Jesus spoke of “**body and soul**” being cast into hell (*gehenna*). This could only be referring to **a resurrected body** and therefore refers to the lake of fire. Jesus said:

*“And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy **both soul and body in hell** (gehenna)”* (Matt. 10:28).

When the Beast, the false Prophet, and those who receive the mark of the Beast, are cast into the lake of fire after Christ’s second advent, the Lord will say,

*“Depart from me, ye cursed, **into everlasting fire**, prepared for the devil and his angels”* (Matt. 25:41).

Thus the unsaved from the Tribulation period will **not have to wait until the end of the 1,000 years** of millennial kingdom to be judged at the Great

White Throne but will go immediately to the lake of fire which is “*prepared for the Devil and his angels*” (Matt. 25:41).

The Devil does not go to *hades* except the bottomless pit portion during the millennium, but he does go to *gehenna* which was prepared for him when he rebelled against the throne of God.

The resurrection of some unsaved and some saved at the 2nd advent of Christ was prophesied by Daniel:

“there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt” (Dan. 12:1-2).

Amillennialists use this verse to support their view of a general resurrection when Christ returns but it is clear that only “*many*” are raised at this time and that Tribulation martyrs are the only saved who are raised. Neither Old Testament nor Church-age saints have any part in this resurrection (Rev. 20:4-5). John wrote:

*“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had **not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands**; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But **the rest of the dead** lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.”*

The “*rest of the dead*” are raised 1,000 years later so there is definitely **no general resurrection** of all the dead at the second advent of Christ! The Old Testament saints from Adam to Christ were raised with Christ (Matt. 27:52-53).

SATAN BOUND FOR 1,000 YEARS

At the same time as the Beast and his followers are cast into the Lake of Fire, Satan is bound in the bottomless pit. We remember that an angel opened the bottomless pit in Rev. 9:1-12 to release many demons. It would appear that all of Satan’s demons are bound **with him at the Second Advent** for Isaiah prophesied:

*“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall punish **the host of the high ones that are on high**, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And*

they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited

(Isa. 24:21-22).

The “*host of the high ones that are on high*” are distinct from the kings of the earth and refer to spiritual beings. The word translated “*pit*” is translated *dungeon* in Jeremiah when it speaks of him being put in an underground pit used as a **prison cell** with a stone rolled on the opening (Jer. 38:6; Lam. 3:53). In Gen. 40:15 Joseph was put in a *dungeon* also. We therefore conclude that the **demons also will be bound** with Satan in the bottomless pit.

The demons fear the bottomless pit and they are aware that they are destined to be incarcerated there in the future for when Jesus cast the legion of demons from the demoniac of Gadara they “*besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep (bottomless pit, or abyss)*” (Luke 8:31).

When Jesus died He went to paradise which was in *sheol*; called the *abyss* for Romans 10:7 states:

“Or who shall descend into the deep (abyss) (that is to bring up Christ again from the dead).”

The “*unseen realm*” was called by the Hebrew word, *sheol*, and the Greek word is *hades*, which literally means “*unseen*”. *Sheol* included paradise, the unseen realm where OT saints went to wait for Christ to come and rise from the dead but it **also** included a place of torment and flames where the souls of the unsaved went to await the “*resurrection to damnation*” at the Great White Throne at the end of the 1,000 years reign of Christ.

In Luke 16:19-31 Jesus described conditions in *sheol (hades)* when He spoke of the rich man and Lazarus. **Between paradise and the place of torment** there is a “*great gulf fixed*” which would appear to be the bottomless pit where Satan and the demons will be confined.

John saw the bottomless pit opened in Rev. 9:2 and “*there arose a smoke of a great furnace*”. Hades is where the rich man was tormented in the flames of *hades* (Luke 16:24) so it seems that Satan will be seen by the unsaved in *hades* when he is bound there and the unsaved souls will be surprised that the arch deceiver is judged. Isaiah wrote of Satan:

“For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell,

to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee... saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms” (Isa. 14:13-16).

In the eternal state of the new heavens and earth the lake of fire will be visible:

*“And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me: **for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched**; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh” (Isa. 66:23-24).*

In eternity we will see things differently to the way we see them on earth. Relationships will be different and we will see things entirely from God’s perspective; his righteousness and justice; His love and mercy and His judgment on all sinners.

We see this in a measure now. When men commit crimes there are always some who have sympathy for the criminal. They excuse their actions by saying they were not responsible or have had a bad upbringing; are the victim of circumstances and therefore can’t be blamed. Light sentences are often imposed because of sympathy based on diminished responsibility, and **victims are often forgotten**. When God judges, He judges righteous judgment and all are fully responsible.

When Mystery Babylon is burned all heaven will rejoice! Rev. 19:1-2. Nobody in heaven will complain that God is too hard or too unkind. The longsuffering of God is available to all on earth but the day of mercy has an end.

WHAT DIFFERENCE WILL SATAN’S BINDING MAKE?

When Satan is bound in the Bottomless Pit all his present activities will cease. Satan will have already lost his “place” in heaven at the mid-point of the Tribulation when Michael and his angels cast him and his angels out of heaven for we read, “*neither was **THEIR PLACE** found any more in heaven*” (Rev. 12:8). We don’t read that Satan is so angry before his defeat by Michael; his activities are more conniving, deceitful, and arrogant. In this age Satan is portrayed as an “*angel of light*” (2 Cor. 11:14) and Paul refers to the “*wiles of the devil*” (Eph. 6:11) as he uses “*devices*” to gain an advantage over believers (2 Cor. 2:11) and “*hinder*” God’s work (1 Thess. 2:18). Fiery darts of “doubt” are cast at the believer which can only be repelled by the shield of faith (Eph. 6:16) and he accuses us “*before our God day and night*” (Rev. 12:10).

At this present time Satan is called the “*God of this world*” who “*blinds the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them*” (2 Cor. 4:4).

On the mount of temptation Satan arrogantly sought worship from the Lord Jesus and claimed that he had power over “*all the kingdoms*” on earth (Luke 4:6).

Satan’s character can change from that of a seducer to a “*roaring lion*” (1 Peter 5:8) seeking to destroy the believer by stirring evil men to oppose and violently persecute the heralds of the Gospel.

Satan has access to heaven at the present time but he spends much time “*going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it*” (Job 1:7).

Satan is a formidable foe; far too strong for mere mortals to overcome for even “*Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, **The Lord rebuke thee***” (Jude 1:9).

Satan has the “*power of death*” (Heb. 2:14) and seeks to destroy mankind who is made in the image of God. Jesus said:

“He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it” (John 8:44).

Men are stirred to violence by Satan just as Cain slew Abel at the beginning of the human race.

Satan is not responsible for all the sin of mankind and cannot be blamed for any person’s transgression of God’s law. Men sin because they choose to obey the evil desires of their heart which is deceitful and desperately wicked (Jer. 17:9) but Satan appeals to the evil heart and entices it to disobey God. He cast doubt on God’s Word to Eve and asked, “*Hath God said?*” even before she had fallen into sin. We need to realise that Satan is our adversary but we are responsible entirely for our actions.

When Satan is bound, cast into the bottomless pit, and has a seal set upon the pit to prevent escape for 1,000 years, **all of his activities will cease.**

The first generation in the millennial kingdom of Christ will be entirely saved people but as children are born they will need to come to saving faith in Christ just as we do today. However, they will not be subject to the subtle attacks of the enemy but rather will constantly be encouraged to live in obedience to God’s laws and to place their faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is hard to imagine the world without Satan's deception and violence; where the laws of every country are in full accord with the law of God and administrators deal righteously with every case according to Truth. Demon possession will not exist, the kings of the earth will no longer give their power to Satan and men will no longer be encouraged to doubt the Truth or be enticed into believing lies.

LIFE IN THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM OF CHRIST

At this present time the kingdoms of this world are controlled by Satan (Luke 4:6) but when Satan is bound during the millennial kingdom, Christ will reign over the entire world. It is during the Tribulation that the Lord Jesus **begins** to take His great power and reign (Rev. 11:17) and to *“put down all rule and authority and power”* (1 Cor. 15:24). However, Paul wrote that *“He must reign, till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death”* (1 Cor. 15:25-26).

Christ will come and will reign **on the earth**. Joel wrote:

*“So shall ye know that **I am the LORD your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more”*** (Joel 3:17).

Zechariah wrote:

*“And the LORD shall be king **over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one”*** (Zech 14:9).

Isaiah wrote:

*“Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall **reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously”*** (Isa. 24:23).

Micah wrote:

*“And I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation: and **the LORD shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever”*** (Micah 4:7)

Great changes will take place when Christ reigns:

- i)** Righteous Government will fill the earth (Isa. 11:9):
“the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea” (Isa. 11:9).
- ii)** All Jews will return to the land:
“Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel...”

*Then shall they know that I am the LORD their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: **but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there.** Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD” (Ezek. 39:25-29).*

- iii) The 12 apostles will judge the 12 tribes of Israel:
*“In the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, **ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribe of Israel**” (Matt. 19:28).*
- iv) David will be the Prince over all Israel
*“Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and **David their king**; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days” (Hosea 3:5).*
- v) The Jews will rule under Christ as King
*“For the nation and kingdom that will not **serve thee** (Israel) shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted” (Isa. 60:12).
*“It shall come to pass **in the last days**, that the mountain of the LORD’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and **all nations** shall flow unto it” (Isa. 2:2).**
- vi) Jews will be honoured:
*“In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold **out of all languages** of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you” (Zech. 8:23).*
- vii) The Jews will teach the law to the world:
*“And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: **for out of Zion shall go forth the law**, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem” (Isa. 2:3).*
- viii) Wars will cease:
*“They shall beat their **swords into plowshares**, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (Isa. 2:4).*

ix) The animals will be at peace:

“The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice’ den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain” (Isa. 11:6-9; 65:25; Hos. 2:18).

x) The deserts will blossom (Isa. 35:1):

*“I will cause **the shower to come down in his season**; there shall be showers of blessing. And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land” (Ezek. 34:26-27).*

xi) A New Millennial Temple will be built to dimensions given in Ezekiel chapters 40 to 42 and the **glory of God** will be seen:

*“And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and **the earth shined with his glory**” (Ezek. 43:2).*

*“Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for **the LORD shall be thine everlasting light**, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended” (Isa. 60:20).*

xii) Jewish priests will offer sacrifices in the Millennial Temple in **memorial** of Christ’s death:

*“The priests the Levites, **the sons of Zadok**, that kept the charge of my sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from me, they shall come near to me to minister unto me, and they shall stand before me to offer unto me the fat and the blood, saith the Lord GOD” (Ezek. 44:15).*

*“Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all **they that sacrifice** shall come and take of them, and seethe (boil) therein” (Zech. 14:21).*

xiii) Gentiles will go to Jerusalem to keep the feasts of the Lord:

“Every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles” (Zech. 14:16).

xiv) The Dead Sea will be made fresh and have fish:

*“Waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward... it shall come to pass, that the **fishermen shall stand upon it from Engedi** even unto **Eneglaim**; they shall be a place to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many”* (Ezek. 47:1-10; Zech 14:8; Joel 3:18).

Fresh water will flow from under the Temple down to the Dead Sea. We know where Engedi is located on the west coast of the Dead Sea but Bible maps fail to show any location for Eneglaim.

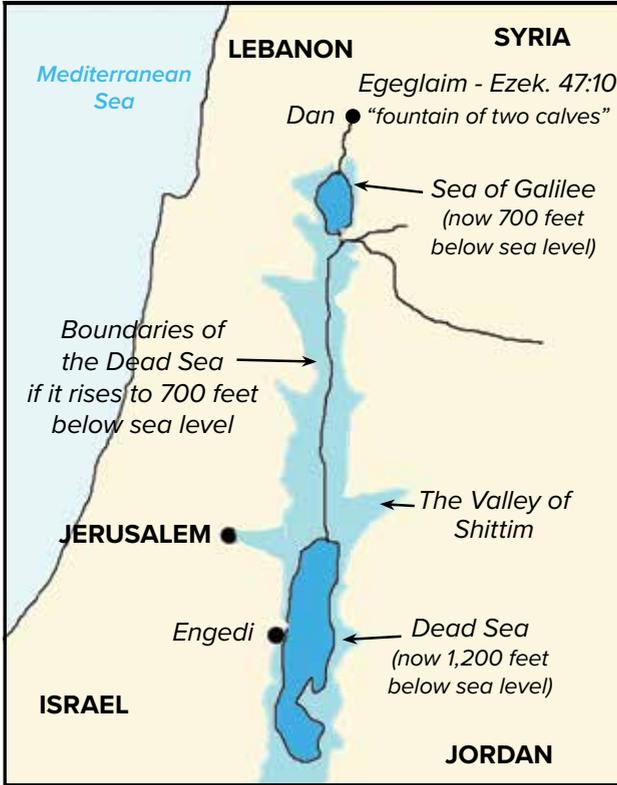
The name Eneglaim means in Hebrew, *“the fountain of two calves”* and this could give us a clue as to where it is located. The “two calves” no doubt refers to the two golden calves made by Jeroboam for the ten tribes of Israel when they separated from Judah. One golden calf was placed at **Dan in the north** of Israel and the other was placed at Bethel on the southern border of the ten tribes.

Dan, where one of the golden calves was located, was south of Mount Hermon where the Jordan River is known as the “fountains of Jordan”. Eneglaim can rightly be described as the “fountain of the two calves”. Lake Hula south of Mount Hermon is about 7 meters above sea level and Jordan drops to about 214 meters below sea level at Galilee. The Dead Sea is about 400 meters below Sea level and falling each year. In the millennium the waters will extend from north of Galilee, all the way to the Gulf of Aqaba in the south.

THE LAST REBELLION

At the end of the 1,000 years Satan will be loosed from the bottomless pit for *“a little season”* and allowed to test the nations that have been subject to Christ for 1,000 years. This action by Almighty God demonstrates the fact that **Man has been given a free choice**. The people who Satan will appeal to would be the unsaved on earth at the end of 1,000 years of Christ’s reign. The release of Satan from the bottomless pit means that these are to be given a final choice. What else can we conclude?

How long will Satan have freedom to deceive the nations? The Bible says it is for a *“little season”* (Rev. 20:3). In Revelation chapter 12, when Satan is cast out of heaven into the earth he knows *“that he hath but a short time”* (Rev. 12:12) **which is 42 months**; and during that time he will mobilise the kings of the earth to fight against Christ at His second advent.



At the end of the millennial kingdom of 1,000 years, Satan will have a similar task of mobilising the nations in a revolt against Christ and His people Israel, in *"the beloved city"* (Rev. 20:9). Conditions at the end of the millennial kingdom will be quite different however, to those existing halfway through the Tribulation and it may take longer than 42 months to gather a number *"as the sand of the sea"*. During Christ's reign no doubt many will have obeyed the Lord and submitted to His authority in order to avoid the consequences but their hearts will still be opposed. Nevertheless, it is hard to imagine that the level of wickedness would be comparable with that existing halfway through the Tribulation. God wants genuine heart love and obedience:

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deut 6:4-5).

One would expect additional time will be required to gather the nations and

bring them to Jerusalem to war against Christ and His people at the end of the millennial kingdom since the army that is raised will need to be armed and that involves the manufacture of weapons for the battle which cannot be done on such a large scale without drawing attention to it.

The extent of the rebellion appears to be very great for the invading army is “*as the sand of the sea*” and involves “*the breadth of the earth*”; it will be a global rebellion against God’s people Israel and against the Lord Himself.

Satan will have 1,000 years to plan this attack while writhing powerless in chains of darkness in *hades* knowing the lake of fire is prepared for him; angered by the fact that he is the object of ridicule from those confined with him in *hades* (Isa. 14:9-16) whom he had deceived. He knows that there will be one more chance at freedom and he will come forth from the bottomless pit with such anger and deceit as has never been known before.

The task of deceiving the world will be greater than ever before after 1,000 years of perfect government, prosperity, and peace. But the heart of man has not changed and is still “*deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it*” (Jer. 17:9).

Satan will find a man, Gog, from the land of Magog (Russia), who will become like another antichrist, to lead the masses in open defiance against Christ. We are not told what technique Satan will use but his accusations against Christ and His people will be lies for he is the “*father of lies*” (John 8:44). In the Garden of Eden Satan accused God of deceiving Adam and Eve in order to protect His position as God so if he would do that to a sinless couple in Eden what will he do to respectable yet unregenerate multitudes at the end of the 1,000 years?

Thus we can learn that God does not just want us to be religious like the Pharisees; He wants our genuine love. God doesn’t want us to obey in order to save our own skin. All the good deeds in the world will not convince God that we deserve to go to heaven. We are to love Him because He first loved us! God said to Israel:

*“To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? **Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me**”* (Isa. 1:11-13).

God knows that many will have a sham profession at the end of 1,000 years

and so He will release Satan to expose them. Given the opportunity they will openly show their true colours just like the homosexuals today; they hid their filthy behaviour when the law was against it but given the opportunity, they “come out” and boldly oppose the Law of God.

Thus it will be at the end of the Millennial Kingdom. Gog and Magog will again be the centre of rebellion. Russia has been the great Atheist nation opposing the very existence of God and will lead the attack on Israel in the Tribulation. She will again lead the rebellion at the end of the millenium. The land of Magog (Russia) will be burned in the Tribulation (Ezek. 39:6) and the whole world will be burned at the end of the millenium.

Some confuse this attack by Gog and Magog with Ezek. 38/39 but

- i) one sixth of Gog’s army escape during the Tribulation while none escape at the end of the millenium.
- ii) Ezekiel’s invasion is by a limited number of nations but the final invasion involves all nations.
- iii) Russia is burned after the first invasion but the whole heaven and earth are burned after the second invasion.

The two invasions are separate events over 1,000 years apart.

THE GREAT WHITE THRONE

“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them”
(Rev. 20:11).

The one who sits on this throne can be none other than the Lord Jesus because *“the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son”* (John 5:22).

There is **no rainbow** of mercy about this throne and those who appear before it come from *“death and hades”*. Death is the body and hades is where unsaved souls have been kept in remand to await the judgment day and final sentence for the deeds done in the body. **No saved person will ever appear before this throne of judgment.**

Every person who appears before the Great White Throne will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone.

“they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire” (Rev. 20:13-15).

Note two things:

- 1) They are judged **according to their works** i.e. the degree of punishment is appropriate to their degree of sinfulness.

*“And that servant, which knew his lord’s will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with **many stripes**. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with **few stripes**. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more”* (Luke 12:47).

- 2) Their destiny is determined by whether their name is found in the Lamb’s book of life.

*“And whosoever was not found written **in the book of life** was cast into the lake of fire”* (Rev. 20:15).

Names are blotted out of the book of the living when men refuse the strivings of the Holy Spirit. God is longsuffering and gives many opportunities for men to repent but when the Holy Spirit is finally blasphemed and men set themselves against the Lord, their names are then blotted out.

“And the LORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book” (Exod. 32:33).

Jesus said:

*“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth will **draw all men** unto me”* (John 12:32).

The unsaved have to answer for their sins but the saved have already had their sins judged on the cross. The saved stand before the judgment seat of Christ to **receive rewards** for faithfulness. Worthless service means: *“he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire”* (1 Cor. 3:15).

Amillennialists hold to a General Resurrection at which all the saved and unsaved stand before God to be judged but this is entirely contrary to Scripture. One Amillennialist teaches that *“death”* refers to the saved and *hades* refers to the unsaved who stand before the Great White Throne but the Bible says that *“**death AND hades** were cast into the lake of fire”* (Rev. 20:14).

The wonder of our salvation is that immediately we turn from sin and believe in Christ for salvation, **God justifies us freely, imputing our sin to Christ and His righteousness to us**. God not only forgives our sin but He also declares us righteous, *“not by works of righteousness that we have done but according to His mercy”* (Titus 3:5). At the same time God *“seals us with the Holy Spirit”* (Eph. 1:13) until the *“day of redemption”* when we are raptured

into His presence. We are regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and made a “*new creature in Christ Jesus*” (2 Cor. 5:17) and at the same time we are “*born again*” by the Holy Spirit into the family of God and are made the children of God.

Thus John could write:

*“Beloved, **now are we the sons of God**, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: **but we know** that, when he shall appear, **we shall be like him**; for we shall see him as he is”* (1 John 3:2).

THE EARTH WILL BE BURNED

At the same time as the Great White Throne judgment takes place we read that “*the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them*” (Rev. 20:11). The heaven referred to in this scripture must of necessity be the **atmospheric heavens** surrounding the earth. Ecclesiastes 1:4 states:

*“One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: **but the earth abideth for ever.**”*

The Psalmist said:

*“Thy faithfulness is unto all generations: thou hast established the earth, and it **abideth**”* (Ps. 119:90).

*“the world also is stablished, that **it cannot be moved**”* (Ps. 93:1).

*“the LORD reigneth: the world also **shall be established that it shall not be moved**”* (Ps. 96:10).

*“And he built his sanctuary like high palaces, like **the earth which he hath established for ever**”* (Ps. 78:69).

*“They shall fear thee (Christ) **as long as the sun and moon endure...** His name shall endure **for ever**: his name shall be continued **as long as the sun**”* (Ps. 72:5,17).

There are three heavens:

The first heaven is the atmosphere in which the birds fly. In Gen. 1:20 we read of the “*fowl that fly above the earth in **the open firmament of heaven.**”*

When the Bible speaks of the stars falling from heaven to the earth and states that the “powers of the heavens shall be shaken” (Matt. 24:29), it refers to asteroids and meteorites falling through the atmosphere of the **first heaven** surrounding the earth as “falling stars” or “shooting stars”.

Within our solar system there is a vast asteroid belt about 150km wide located between Jupiter and Mars. The largest asteroid is about 1,000 km diameter; more than 200 are greater than 100km diameter, and about a million asteroids are less than one kilometer diameter. Meteorites are smaller

asteroids and when they pass into earth's atmosphere they entirely burn up unless they are large enough to reach the earth.

The second heavens are the stars and galaxies in space while the "third heavens" is God's dwelling place (2 Cor. 12:2).

When Jesus said that "*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away*" (Matt. 24:35), He was not saying that the earth would cease to exist but that everything on the earth and in the first heaven would be burned up. Peter makes this clear:

*"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which **the heavens shall pass away** with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, **the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up**"* (2 Peter 3:10).

The firmament, the air we breathe, will disappear or "*flee away* (lit. *vanished*) and there was no place found for them" (Rev. 20:11) and there will be "*no more sea*" (Rev. 21:1) i.e. "*the first heaven and first earth were passed away.*"

There are 1. 33 billion cu km of water in the oceans covering 72% of the earth's surface, and there are 30 million cu.km of ice making a total of 1. 36 billion cu.km of water that will evaporate when "*all these things shall be dissolved*" (2 Peter 3:11). Peter described this event as follows:

*"The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the **heavens shall pass away** with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, **the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up**"* (2 Peter 3:10).

How will God do this? We cannot say but there are a number of possibilities:

- i) There are vast oil, gas and coal reserves stored in the earth and under the oceans which we call "fossil fuels". If God was to send a global earthquake to shake the entire crust of the earth releasing volcanic material from the bowels of the earth and filling the air with methane gas it could ignite the entire world consuming all the oxygen in the atmosphere.

God shook Sodom and Gomorrah and caused the Dead Sea to drop to 400 meters (1,300 feet) below sea level forming the "great rift" which runs from the Bekaa Valley in Lebanon through the Sea of Galilee, the Dead Sea, the Gulf of Aqaba to the Red Sea and down into Africa; a total of 6,000 km. In Africa, Lake Tanganyika is 1,470 meters (4,820 feet) deep!

ii) Another possibility would be if a large asteroid passed through the earth's atmosphere and crashed into the ocean. The friction caused by the atmosphere would generate enormous heat that would scorch the entire earth's surface. Even now it is estimated 100 tons of meteorites strike the earth daily but these are only small; less than 25 meters. Many asteroids are larger than 100 km diameter but any asteroid greater than one kilometer would have a global impact.

Large burning asteroids could evaporate the oceans and shatter the earth's thin crust which is only 40 km thick.

THE NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH

The new heaven and earth will be a **renovated** earth and an entirely new environment. Its inhabitants will be resurrected people who have trusted in the mercy of God and been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ; there will be three classes of saints; the saved Jews, Gentiles and the Church.

In the Old Testament there were only Jews and Gentiles but after Pentecost, there was "*neither Jew nor Greek (Gentile)... but all one in Christ Jesus*" (Gal. 3:28). When the Church is removed at the Rapture, Israel will again become God's witness on earth through the seven years of Tribulation and on into the millennial kingdom.

The three distinct groups of **saints** will continue on into the eternal kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ in the New Heavens and New Earth as follows:

- The Church will occupy the New Jerusalem as Christ's bride;
- Israel will be located around the New Jerusalem and
- the Gentiles will occupy the new earth;

all will have resurrection bodies like unto Christ's resurrection body.

Dispensational truth cannot be over emphasised. If we do not understand the different ages and administrations that God has ordained for the human race we cannot "*rightly divide the word of Truth*". The special place that Israel has in God's dealings with the human race are at the centre of the message of redemption because the Jew was chosen in Abraham to be the vehicle that would bring God's beloved Son into the world and it was Jewish prophets who spoke, recorded, and preserved the Words of God.

The covenants made by God with Abraham and confirmed to Isaac and Jacob, place the nation of Israel in a special relationship with God. Furthermore, the Sinaiic and Palestinian covenants confer the blessings of Abraham

on the nation of Israel and the Davidic covenant creates the throne from which Christ will reign in the **future kingdom** when God will make a “*new covenant*” with His people (Jer. 31:31-34).

At the end of the millennium, the kingdom of God that Satan took when man rebelled against God will be regained and Christ will have recovered the earth. Paul wrote:

“Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power” (1 Cor. 15:24).

The last enemy death, is destroyed when the redeemed occupy the new earth in resurrection bodies.

THE NEW JERUSALEM

In the eternal kingdom of Christ after the earth is regenerated by fire, the redeemed will dwell with perfect harmony in the service of God.

“And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new” (Rev. 21:5) *“for the former things are **passed away**”* (Rev. 21:4).

Every relic of the past will be gone and every trace of sin will cease. All tears, death, sorrow, crying and pain will be but a distant memory. There will be “*no more curse*” (Rev. 22:3), sin and sinners will be excluded (Rev. 21:8) and “*his servants will serve Him: and they shall see His face*” (Rev. 22:3).

Nobody will be idle in that place; the saved Gentile kings of the new earth will come into the New Jerusalem and “*bring the glory and honour of the nations into it*” (Rev. 21:26).

THE WALL OF THE CITY

A wall, 1,500 Roman miles long (2,220 km) on each side of the city will surround the New Jerusalem; it will be 250 feet high with 12 gates, each inscribed with the name of one of the 12 tribes of **Israel**. Each gate will be made of one pearl (Rev. 21:21) and at each gate will stand an angel.

Those entering the New Jerusalem through the 12 gates will be reminded that it has **only been through Israel that we Gentiles are blessed**. God’s promise to bless all nations was to Abraham and through his seed. “*For verily He (Jesus) took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on him **the seed of Abraham***” (Heb. 2:16).

An angel stands at each gate to remind us that the law was given to Israel by angels:

*“For if **the word spoken by angels** was stedfast, and every transgression and*

disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation” (Heb. 2:2-3).

*“Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and **it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator**” (Gal. 3:19).*

It is angels who carry out the judgments pronounced by the Lord Jesus at the Great White Throne and who cast condemned sinners into the lake of fire. It is angels’ responsibility to administer God’s law; they are God’s law-enforcement officers. For the redeemed, **the demands of God’s law have been fully met by the Lord Jesus** and the gates are never shut (Rev. 21:25); nobody in the new earth will be excluded from the presence of God.

During the millennium the Church, the bride, the Lamb’s wife, will dwell in the heavenly Jerusalem, and daily reign with Christ on the earth until the 1,000 years are expired and Satan is finally cast into the lake of fire. Then, our home in heaven will be **relocated to a new earth**. Then, the *“tabernacle of God will be with men”* (Rev. 21:3).

The throne of God that is now located in the heavenly Temple will be relocated to the New Jerusalem and we will be able to watch from the heights of that vast city as daily the redeemed of the Gentile *“nations of them that are saved”*, come through the pearly gates to bring their praises to God on His throne in the midst of the city. These gates will never be shut and a shining angel will **welcome** the redeemed to the courts of heaven.

But the gates also speak of the Church. She is the *“pearl of great price”* (Matt. 13:46) for which the Saviour sold all that He had to purchase. He paid the full price on a cruel cross and each visitor to the city will be reminded that Christ *“loved the Church and gave Himself for it”* (Eph. 5:25). There is only one pearl in each gate to show there is only **one Church; one Bride, and one Body** of Christ. Each gate testifies to the fact that this glorious golden city is where the Church dwells eternally with the Heavenly Bridegroom. This is the home of the *“pearl of great price”* and her identity is in every gate.

The purpose of this wall is not to keep out evil doers for there will be none in the new earth, but the wall will identify three classes of saints who have all been made the objects of His grace and now serve in the eternal kingdom of our God and Saviour. Just as on earth, through history, there has been the Jew, the Gentile and the Church, so in eternity there will be three societies of blessed people: the Jew, the Gentile and the Church.

At the very beginning of the eternal kingdom when all evil has been finally

subdued and judged in the lake of fire, the Lord Jesus will **deliver up the kingdom to the Father** (1 Cor. 15:24); His mission to earth complete for He bought it with His own blood and reigned until all His enemies were subdued under His feet. Then it will be said:

“The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever” (Rev. 11:15).

THE TEMPLE AND THE THRONE OF GOD

“I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it” (Rev. 21:22).

There is a Temple in heaven at the present time (Rev. 15:5) where God’s throne is located; the Tabernacle and Solomon’s Temple were built in the similitude of that heavenly Temple (Heb. 8:5). Within the Tabernacle and Temple there was an inner sanctuary called the Holy of holies where the ark of the testimony was kept.

The ark of the testimony in the Tabernacle was 2. 5 cubits long x 1. 5 cubits wide and high. If the royal cubit of 20. 67 inches was used the ark was 51. 7 in. x 31 in. x 31 in. It was made of wood overlaid with gold but the lid was of pure gold and was called the Mercy Seat or throne. On the day of atonement the blood of a goat was sprinkled 7 times on and before the Mercy Seat. God said to Moses, *“There will I meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims”* (Exod. 25:22).

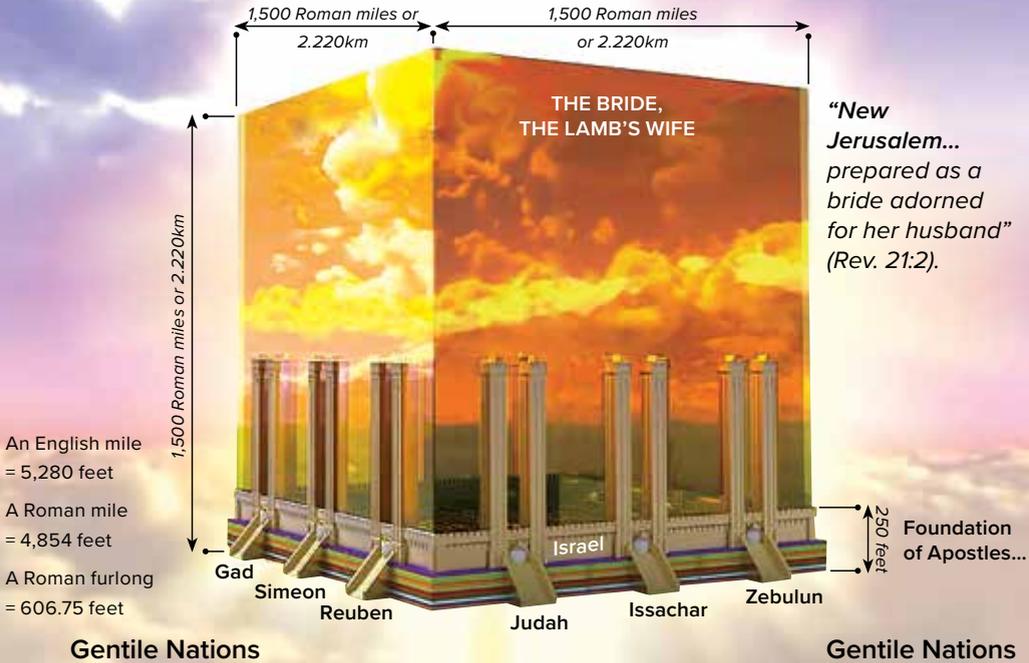
God showed Moses the throne of God in heaven and the ark with its mercy seat overshadowed by the cherubims, replicated it. *“Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face”* (Ps. 89:14).

The ark contained the two tablets of the law indicating that God’s throne is established on His holy law.

The ark that Moses made was placed in the Temple of Solomon and two large golden cherubims were placed in the Holy of holies and their wings stretched across the full 20 cubits width of the Holy of holies; each cherubim’s wings measured 10 cubits from tip to tip.

Angels surround God’s throne in heaven and during the Tribulation the Temple in heaven is opened (Rev. 11:19) as seven angels emerge to announce the last seven plagues known as the seven vial judgments. God’s dwelling place in heaven is in the presence of angels but in the New heaven and earth that will change and God will dwell in the immediate presence of redeemed and resurrected men.

“Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb’s wide... and (he) shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. Having the glory of God; and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal” (Rev. 21:9-11).



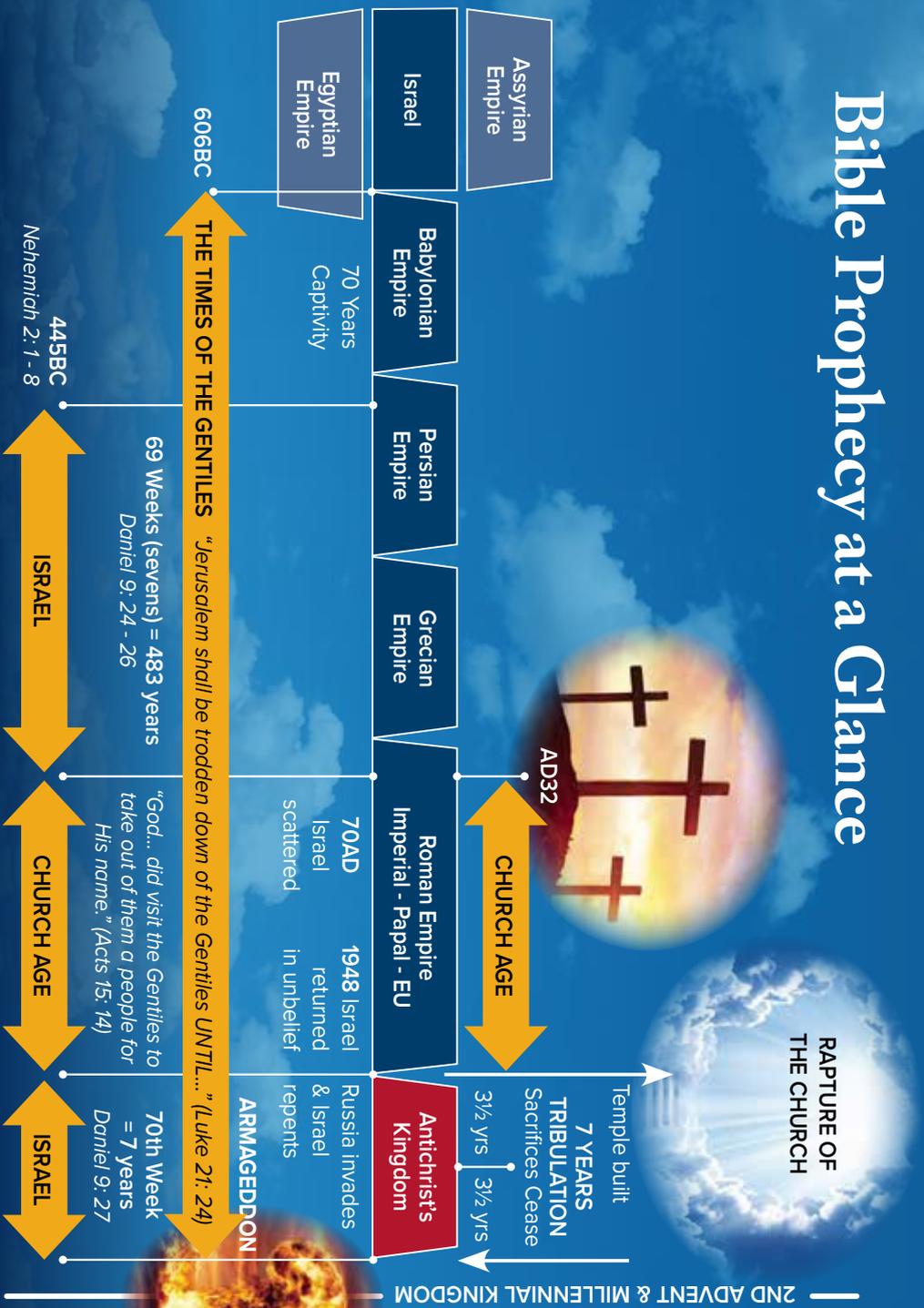
John said,

“I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is **with men**, and he will dwell **with them**, and they shall be his people, and God himself **shall be with them**, and be their God” (Rev. 21:3).

“There shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and **his servants shall serve him**; and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads” (Rev. 22:3-4).

Where will the angels be in the new heaven and earth? It would appear they continue in heaven and communicate between heaven and earth as they do now.

Bible Prophecy at a Glance





Bible Prophecy shines as a light in a dark place to give hope to all who take heed to its warning.

For the Christian, Bible Prophecy reveals “*the Blessed Hope*” of Christ’s return to the air to catch away His bride before the coming Great Tribulation. For the unsaved, Bible Prophecy warns of fearful times ahead.

This book gathers together the major elements of prophecy and expresses them in layman’s language so that those with no prior understanding of prophecy can establish the benchmarks that will open up the entire Bible.

Many have testified that once they understood the dispensations of time, the ‘mystery’ was removed from Bible study. Its history became fascinating, its practical instruction became meaningful, and uncertainty was removed about the future.



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THE FINAL APPEAL

*“And the Spirit and the bride say, **Come**. And let him that heareth say, **Come**. And let him that is athirst **come**. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely”* (Rev. 22:17).

The Bible closes with a passionate appeal to all mankind to **come to Christ and receive the free gift of salvation**. Eternal life is a FREE GIFT. *“The wages of sin is death but the **gift of God** is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord”* (Rom. 6:23).

We earn and deserve eternal punishment for our sin but God has provided salvation purchased on the cross by **one sacrifice for ever**, as a free and eternal gift. The choice is yours.

We cannot obtain salvation by good deeds because God requires that which is past and our good deeds can never satisfy the perfect righteous standard of God. But Jesus was perfect and as the perfect One He took our sin on Himself as our substitute and bore the wrath O God that we justly deserve. Now by His Spirit He is pleading with all mankind to **Come to Him and take the gift of eternal life freely**. Have you come yet? If not, why not? Eternity is a long time; it is for ever; so why reject God's offer? The fleeting pleasures of sin for a few years down here are but for a moment but eternity is for ever.

*“As many as **received him**, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, **even to them that believe on his name**: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God”* (John 1:12-13).

*“The Spirit and the bride say, **Come**. And let him that heareth say, **Come**. And let him that is athirst **come**. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely”* (Rev. 22:17).